Aging Out: One Girl's Life After Foster Care
BY CHRIS SANTORO

Attention Must Be Paid (At CCM) to Aubrey Berg
BY POLK LAFFOON IV

Welcome to Fabulous Cheviot! (No, Really.)
BY JACK HEFFRON

Cincinnati

Best Restaurants

Where to Eat Now!

BY DONNA COVRETT

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82 **BUBBA KNOWS BEST**
They graduate and go on the road, or hit the West coast, or storm onto Broadway. They score at auditions, walk away with Tonys, and make us proud. What gives the singing, dancing, acting wunderkinder of CCM's musical theater program an edge? Meet Aubrey Berg.
BY POLK LAFFOON IV

86 **AGING OUT**
A well-meaning volunteer steps in to help a young woman raised in foster care. The volunteer was committed; the girl was confident. Success seemed attainable. Two years later, one of them is homeless, the other is nearly out of hope. How do you move past a childhood of neglect? They'd both like to know.
BY CHRIS SANTORO

68

WHERE TO EAT NOW 2010

Old favorites? Of course. Fresh faces? They're in there, too. Our annual ranking of the city's finest restaurants presents the shining stars in a galaxy of good dining. PLUS Duck fat fries, ginger cider, cathead biscuits, and 14 other treats to try now.... *And* six chefs dish on their deepest desires. BY DONNA COVRETT

HOLY MACARONI
Cumin's cold water lobster ravioli with hearts of palm, bacon, chili oil, and beurre blanc.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ

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page **246**

page **68**

page **38**

page **40**

page **256**

page **34**

page **36**

8 **Contributors**

16 **Letter from the Editor**

18 **Feedback**

21 **Frontlines**
Know Theatre mounts a modern classic **BEING THERE** Richard Brown, maître d' Boca **DR. KNOW** Your QC questions answered **WHAT'S HAPPENING** David Gray croons at Taft Theater, *The 39 Steps* strides into the Aronoff, and Cincinnati Reds spring training is at-bat in Goodyear, Arizona **VENTURE CAPITAL** Mothers and fathers of invention

33 **Radar**
NECESSITIES Top knobs **THE ADDRESS** The Penthouse at The Ascent **DEVELOPMENT WATCH** The greening of Cincinnati State **INTERSECTION** Museum retail therapy **FASHION EXPORT** John Bartlett expands his line **ESCAPE** Final Four rendezvous in Indy

Departments

54 **ODD MAN OUT**
Vulgarian at the plate: confessions of a non-foodie

58 **WEST SIDE STORY**
In heaven there is no beer. That's why we hang out here

64 **BUSINESS**
In a college town, weird names, steamed bagels, and late-night attitude spell success

173 **Dine**
RESTAURANTS Our annual comprehensive dining out guide, listing hundreds of area restaurants

245 **Calendar**
MUSEUMS Shepard Fairey hangs at the Contemporary Art Center **GALLERY** David Jarred and Kevin White at Thunder-Sky, Inc. **LECTURE** Rick Steves visits the library **Q&A** David Montgomery, 2008 MacArthur Fellow **LISTINGS** February events

256 **The Last Detail**
Bedeviled in the white city

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Web Exclusive

As part of the 2010 "Where to Eat Now" package, Donna Covrett asked six local chefs 28 questions. Some of their answers appear in "The Hot Seat," starting on page 71. Complete interviews appear on our Web site.

Web Exclusive

For more from Boca general manager Richard Brown, our Being There subject this month (page 24), see his complete interview with Alyssa Brandt on our Web site.

Catch Up

In January, Cincinnati Cooks—a program of the Freestore Foodbank that teaches food service and life skills to low-income adults—moved into a new home in the Freestore Foodbank's new administration building on Central Parkway in the West End. Read more about the program in Linda Vaccariello's story "Soul Kitchen," from June 2003.

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Contributors

Ryan Kurtz

While the past year has seen some of the most complex and dramatic upheavals in Cincinnati's restaurant history, fear not, gourmands and gastronomes: Dining Editor **DONNA COVRETT** is here to dish about the state of our cuisine scene. (And the state of our scene is strong.) That's right, it's time for our annual "Where to Eat Now" roundup (page 68), the definitive guide to Queen City dining. And about those images that have you reaching for the nearest fork? Thank photographer **RYAN KURTZ**. "Ryan has the ability to capture the soul of a restaurant and the seduction of a dish," Covrett says.

Chris Santoro

Imagine growing up in foster care, a victim of abuse and neglect, only to find yourself on the street at 18 with two kids, few life skills, and little education. For one 24-year-old woman who "aged out" of the foster care system six years ago, this nightmare is a reality. Freelance writer **CHRIS SANTORO,** herself a mother and a child advocate, tells this woman's harrowing tale in "Aging Out" (page 86). "I think if people knew what life was like for a majority of kids who age out of the Hamilton County foster care system, they'd be appalled, then angry, then motivated to help," she says. Santoro is a writer for *Columbus Parenting Magazine.*

Elizabeth Bronson

By now you've at least driven by The Ascent, with its grand sloping spire overlooking the Ohio River from Covington, dramatically juxtaposed against red-bricked Cincinnati with striking white concrete and blue glass. Now you can step inside the 7,400-square-foot penthouse, The Pinnacle, with writer **ELIZABETH BRONSON**. Boasting panoramic views, this three-story penthouse lies unfinished and unsold. Anyone with $5,450,900 to spare can realize one of Bronson's dreams: "having one's own personal elevator."

Paul Kepple

While working on "Where to Eat Now," designer and illustrator **PAUL KEPPLE** (half of the illustration duo Headcase Designs) was amused to learn that some of us enjoy glazed donuts instead of bread for our grilled cheese sandwiches. So it's no surprise that his ultra-detailed graphic illustrations—think vintage instructional diagrams with a modern twist—convey a sense of humor. Headcase Design's clients include *The New York Times, GQ, Esquire,* and *Wired.* Kepple also teaches part-time at his alma mater, the Tyler School of Art at Temple University in Philadelphia.

LEFT PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ

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HOME & garden

AFTER PAGE 92

The 2010 Fifth Third Bank Cincinnati Home & Garden Show® Presented by Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Honda Dealers

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ON THE WEB THIS MONTH

TOUR A CONIFER GARDEN Read about colorful conifer trees beginning on page H34 of the Show Program. Then, take a virtual tour of Ron and Judy Regenhold's garden in White Oak.

STARTING FROM SEED A lesson in growing vegetables from seeds begins on page H32 of the Show Program. Go online to find these extra features:

- Good lighting is essential for starting seeds indoors. Learn how to make a simple lighting setup for less than $40.
- With yesterday's newspaper and a wooden mold or tin can, you can make your own biodegradable seedling pots in minutes. We'll show you how.
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PHOTO BY RYAN KURTZ

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after 48

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after 208

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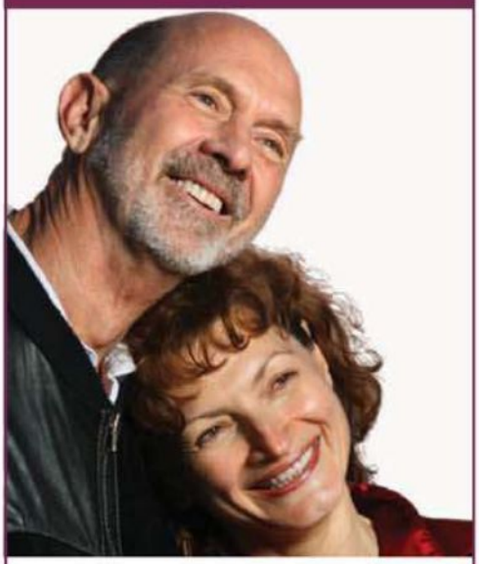

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Letter from the Editor

As I write this, I am hoping with every fiber of my being that my back doesn't suddenly seize up. Not because writing the letter from the editor is such an onerous, spine-twisting task. No, the reason is that I've already shoveled two driveways today—and for someone whose idea of intense exercise is a round of golf and a nice hot bath, two driveways in one day is more than enough.

It is early February, mere days before this issue goes to press, and as you may have guessed, it has snowed. In most parts of the country that experience all four seasons, snow is treated as something less than an extraordinary event. Snow happens and people just deal with it. If you live in one of those parts of the country, I envy you. Because here in Cincinnati, snow doesn't just happen. It invades. Or at least that's how its arrival is treated on local newscasts and in the paper—like an alien force descending from on high. Most of the populace reacts accordingly. And so begins our annual ritual of weather-induced panic.

Now, I may only be 42, but one is never too young to come off sounding like an ancient windbag looking back wistfully at the snows of yesteryear. No kidding: I remember the snows of my youth being much deeper, the winters much colder, and the citizenry much hardier. Granted, I was shorter, less insulated, and more impressionable back then. But consider the frigid winter of 1976-77: It snowed so much and the mercury dropped so low for so long that the Ohio River froze, enabling a number of crazy people to walk across to Kentucky. *That* was a bad winter. But three to six inches of white stuff and temperatures hovering in the low 30s? Come on, people! Get a grip.

Of course, the 21st century Cincinnatian's predilection for poor driving, rampant Krogering, and a general feeling of giddy woe at the merest hint of frozen precipitation makes fine fodder for satire. One example appeared in my e-mail in-box just as the latest winter storm was about to hit. It came from Deli Seven20, the stellar lunch spot down on Pete Rose Way, and was written by a guy named Justin, who likes to salt the daily sandwich alert with wry commentary. His February 5 dispatch did not disappoint. It read, in part: "Beware! The end is near, peoples. Snow like we've never seen (and honestly probably won't see at all) is heading our way (maybe). My advice? Leave work right now and go straight to the grocery and buy as much Slim Jim as you can squeeze into your cart. Even if you're vegetarian...." The special sandwich that day was dubbed "The White Out Returns."

This month in The Last Detail, Bob Woodiwiss, a keen observer of the ways and means of Cincinnati, presents his own take on the city's fear and loathing of snow. In fact, he's come up with a label for this acute mental condition: "Snowpocalypse Now." Whether you suffer from it, or just suffer because other people do, you will recognize it. And, hopefully, laugh.

Jay Stowe
Editor

page 256
"Flake of Darkness," by Bob Woodiwiss

PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ

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THINK ABOUT...

keeping a few no-assembly-required looks on hand for mornings when you're running late.

wearing an armful of bangles—balance is so boring.

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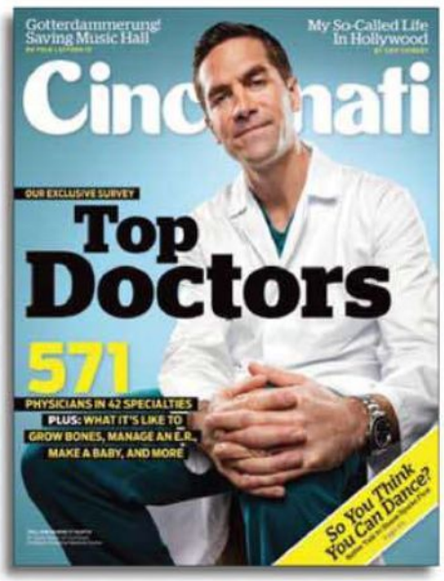

Feedback

> "Whatever possessed J. Kevin Wolfe to recommend Richie's? I read his article and went there during Christmas week. It was the worst fried chicken I have ever eaten! *Yuck*."

Tastes Like Chicken?

Whatever possessed J. Kevin Wolfe to recommend Richie's for its food [Fine Diving, December]? I read his article, and went there during Christmas week. There was plenty of food stacked high, yes. I ordered a chicken dinner basket and took it home. It was the worst fried chicken I have ever eaten! It was obvious that it had sat under those heat lamps for hours. When not only the chicken is dry, but the *batter* is dry, you know you're in trouble. I ordered thighs and legs, by the way. Meaty pieces. They should have been juicy. Not. In short, all I have to say is *yuck*. That picture on page 196 of the magazine looks nothing like how my food looked. I guess next time I'll have to take your food recommendations with a grain of salt.

Audrey Pratt
Colerain Twp.

A Bone to Pick

While I appreciate your Top Doctors survey [January], I am concerned that doctors of chiropractic were not included. Our profession would appreciate the inclusion of chiropractors as a 43rd specialty in your next Top Doctors list.

Dr. Robert Coppola
Elsmere

School Zone

I feel compelled to write in response to your November "Best High Schools" cover story. I was pleasantly surprised that you provided the appropriate caveats: these are not the only good schools, and not all the schools listed will be right for your child.

My main beef, though, is your omission of Cincinnati Country Day School. I am a former CCDS Lower School teacher. At CCDS you get exceptional technology and pedagogy, but you also have an excellent teacher-student ratio. You have the ability to participate in a wide variety of activities that might be precluded in a larger school. All the things that add up to "general excellence," this school has in spades.

Your magazine seems to be saying that $18,000–$20,000 tuition doesn't buy anything special. That is, frankly, a load of hoo-hah. It's insulting to your readers' intelligence, and it's two fingers in the eyes of Cincinnati Country Day School. Next time, tell it like it really is.

Andrew Speno
Mt. Lookout

Beck and Call

Just because Brent Donaldson is a writer in a local magazine does not give him the right to infect everything he writes with his political opinion. Like a review of Walt's Barbeque in Colerain [Weeknight, December]! Who cares who meets there every Wednesday? I don't care what you think about Glenn Beck. I just want to read a review about the food. If you want to voice your political opinion then write about that in a separate article.

Will Jones
Via E-mail

Brent Donaldson responds: The 9-12 group was meeting at Walt's the day I visited. As I was eating, the group members were filling the room with ideologically driven political arguments. Loudly. Of course, as long as the owner lets them carry on this way, they are free to do that, just as I am free to note their presence. Since I did not set out to dine in the midst of heated political discourse, informing readers of the 9-12ers' regular appearance at Walt's is relevant. The good news: They seem to enjoy BBQ, which Walt's has in spades.

Keeping the Faithful

Many, many thanks to you and Julie Irwin Zimmerman for your excellent article "Altared State," about the conflict that has arisen within the Catholic Church [February]. Like our governmental politics these days, the idea that a middle ground might be the solution seems unaccept-

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able to both sides, regardless of how the sides are labeled. The story about Sr. Louise Akers is a sad example of the inability of the church to often reach a middle ground. This could have, and should have, been settled in private, avoiding all of the adverse publicity. She is a wonderful woman, and her accomplishments speak for her.

Vatican II was to the Church like the fairytale about taking the cork out of the bottle and letting the genie out: She won't go back into the bottle. Neither will Vatican II. Vatican II recognized that the laity, in many countries, were now educated, many highly so, and with backgrounds and experience in areas that the Church sorely needed to operate the "corporal business" necessary in the modern world. The child sexual abuse scandal uncovered a disturbing mindset in the hierarchy that was more interested in protecting the "image" of the Church than offering compassion and assistance to those who were abused.

The grassroots organization Voice of the Faithful, of which I am a member, does not promote changes in the fundamental beliefs of the church. It calls for true compassion and assistance for the victims of abuse, and support for the many priests who are faithful to their vows and feel abandoned by both their parishioners and their bishops. The challenge facing Voice of the Faithful and other organizations is to convince more of the laity that they have an active place in the Church. We, the laity, are 99 percent of the membership. We cannot leave the operation to the overworked, dwindling number of the other 1 percent. We must be accepted as equal partners at the table.

Dick Okenfuss
Finneytown

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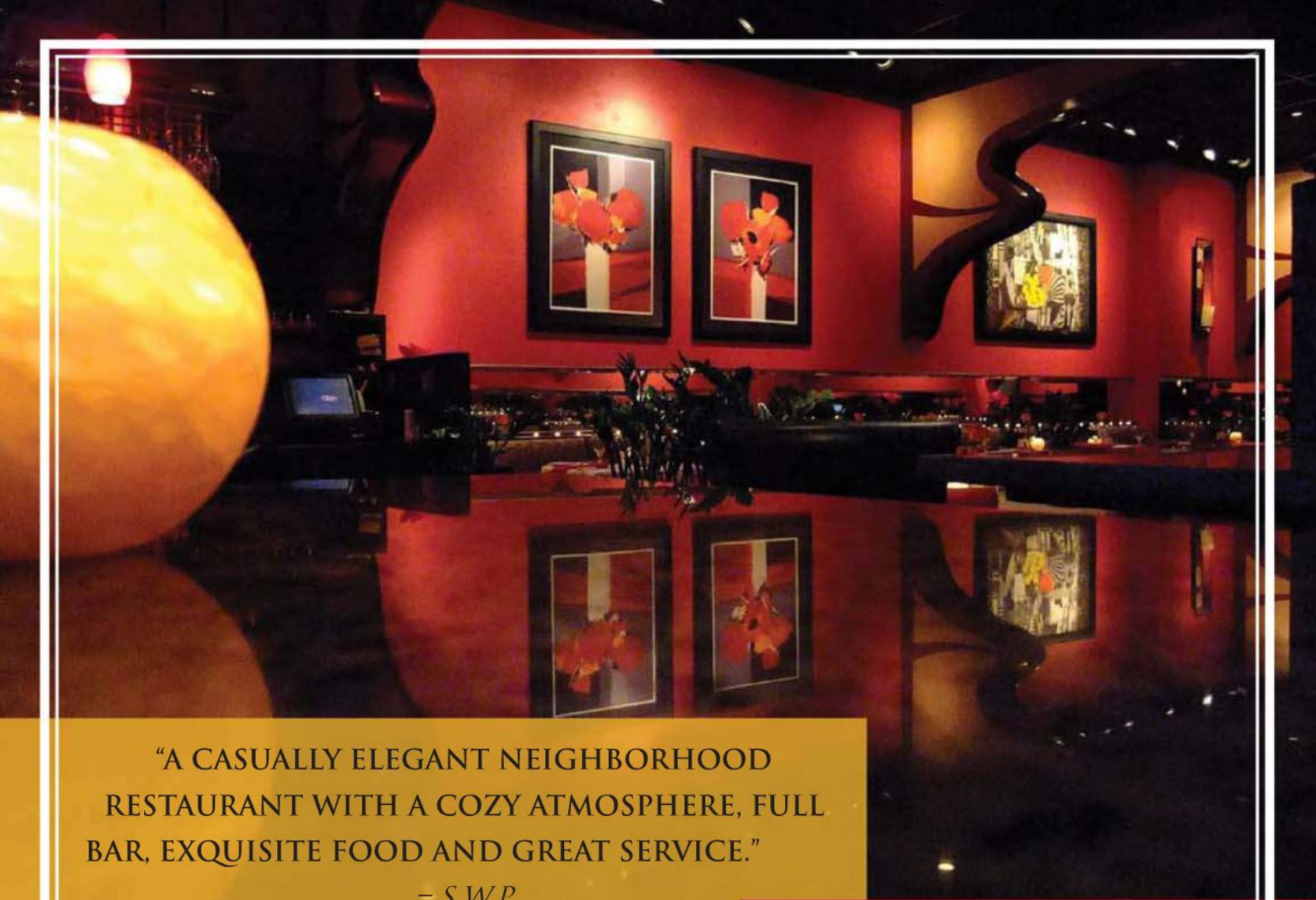

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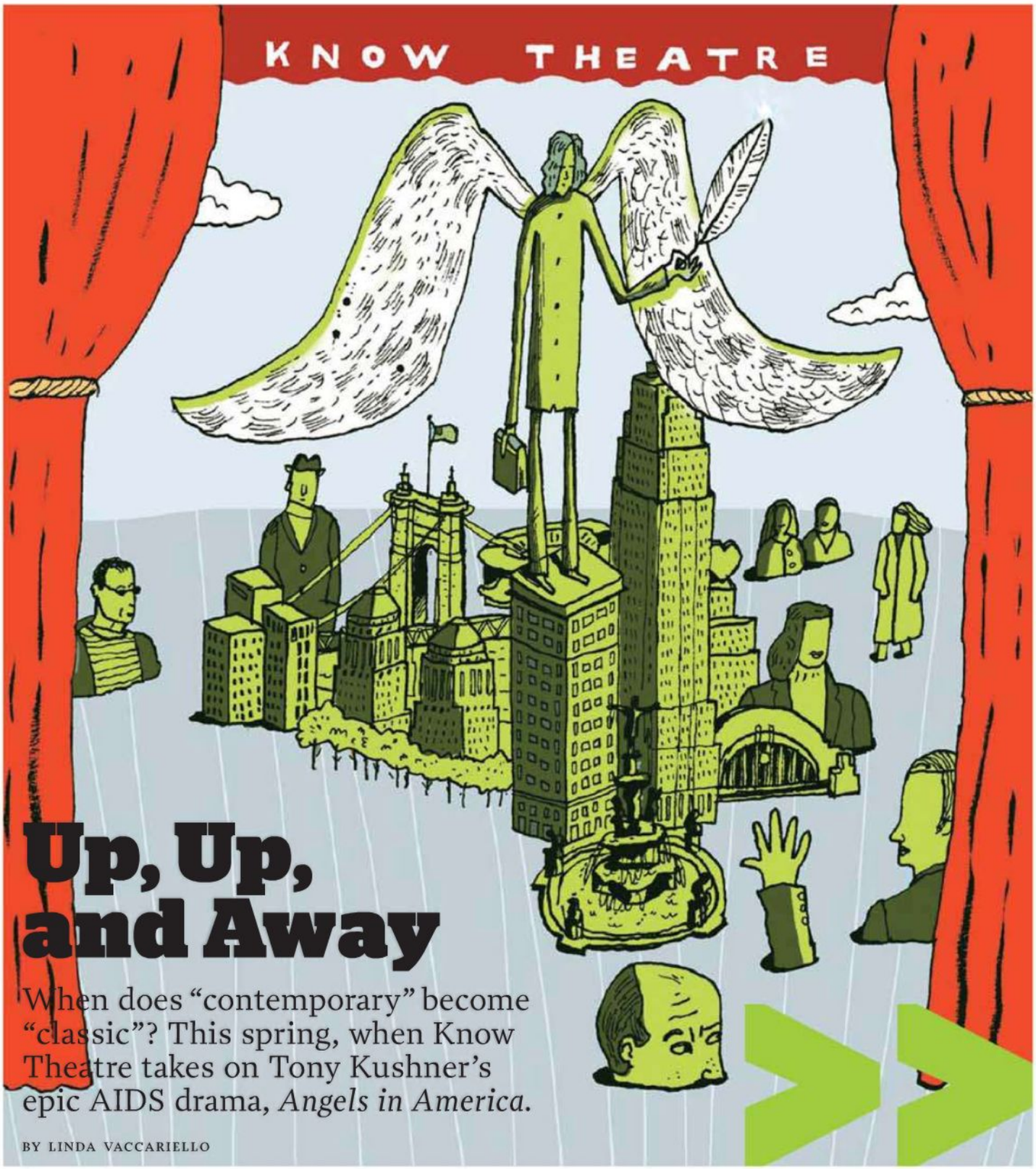
edited by BRENT DONALDSON



Up, Up, and Away

When does "contemporary" become "classic"? This spring, when Know Theatre takes on Tony Kushner's epic AIDS drama, *Angels in America*.

BY LINDA VACCARIELLO

ILLUSTRATION BY PHILIPPE DE KEMMETER

"When Pigall's closed, I had the opportunity to be the butler at Blair House. It didn't quite work out." —Being There 24

"Your mother sounds like Dr. Know's kind of parent, laughing out loud at your credulity." —Dr. Know 26

"Fire extinguishers are too expensive for parts of the world where shantytowns can be devastated in minutes." —Venture Capital 30

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Stage Door Know Theatre's OTR home, complete with ArtWorks mural.

Brian Isaac Phillips usually directs Shakespeare; Eric Vosmeier usually produces contemporary plays. Drew Fracher is the Swiss Army Knife of Cincinnati's stages, morphing from actor to director to fight director wherever his considerable talents are required. And they're all in their element right now, laboring away at Know Theatre in Over-the-Rhine, working on Tony Kushner's acclaimed drama *Angels in America*.

While the monumental production is making only its third regional appearance, Kushner's play was a blockbuster on Broadway throughout the 1990s, winning—among other accolades—the Pulitzer Prize for "Millennium Approaches," the first half of the two-part *Angels* story. Then there was the star-studded 2003 HBO adaptation, with its cataclysmic scenes of crumbling walls and angels descending. So it's easy to think of it as a massive production on an expansive stage. That's an image the Know staff has to reconcile with their modest performance space tucked away on Jackson Street. But, says Fracher, who will direct the second half of the work, "Perestroika," Kushner intended that his sprawling story be performed with spare scenery, and with actors doubling up on parts and characters moving fluidly from scene to scene. "He envisioned it for a theater like this," Fracher says. "An epic play done simply," adds Vosmeier. "That's the essence of what we do."

While the 12-year-old Know Theatre has built its reputation by presenting of-the-moment work by hot young playwrights such as Suzan-Lori Parks and the quirky Sarah Ruhl, *Angels in America* was written 20 years ago. It's set in the 1980s, so it's larded with Reagan-era references and grave discussions of AZT, the first AIDS drug—all of which would seem to make it a bit dated for Know Theatre fare. "We usually do the newest work we can get our hands on," acknowledges Vosmeier. *Angels*, he admits, is now "a period piece."

That isn't necessarily a bad thing. "Anytime there's a major tragic event like the rise of AIDS or 9/11, there are a flood of issue plays," says Phillips, artistic director of Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, who's directing the first half of the drama. The plays that live past their topical references, he points out, are the ones that are about something more profound and universal. Fear, loss, love, change, and transformation—if a production of *Angels in America* succeeds today, it's because it explores themes that still resonate. "It's not just an issue play," Phillips says.

The proof lies in Kushner's expansive dialogue, which hasn't lost its punch. The McCarthy-era machinations of attorney Roy Cohn may be lost to memory for many audience members, but you don't need a history lesson when a character based on the infamous closeted conservative says, "I have sex with men. But unlike nearly every other man of whom this is true, I bring the guy I'm screwing to the White House and President Reagan smiles at us and shakes his hand." Hypocrisy has no expiration date.

In the great classical tradition, *Angels in America* is long. Each half is, well, *Hamlet*-length. The two parts will be performed separately, but on two Saturdays theatergoers will have the opportunity to see "Millennium Approaches" and "Perestroika" back-to-back—all 7 hours of it. "I can't fathom what it will be like," says Vosmeier.

Epic, for sure.

ALL ABOUT *ANGELS*

Identity Crisis
The play calls for its eight actors to play multiple roles, often switching genders. For Know Theatre's production, actress Amy Warner will play a Morman mother as well as a man described as "the world's oldest Bolshevik."

Death Rattle
Two characters are based on actual people: Roy Cohn and Ethel Rosenberg (wife of Julius). In real life, Cohn played a central role in the Rosenbergs' espionage trial and execution. On stage, Ethel's ghost taunts Cohn on his deathbed.

Not So Wild Thing
Need a gentler introduction to Kushner? He's the scribe behind the Maurice Sendak-illustrated children's book *Brundibar*.

Angels in the Know
Know Theatre of Cincinnati will present "Millennium Approaches" April 3–May 8, "Perestroika" April 23–May 8, and both shows back-to-back on May 1 & 8, as part of the first annual Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Theatre Festival. For details and tickets call (513) 300-KNOW.

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Being There

Richard Brown

If you've dined out at a good restaurant in this town more than once, you've probably met Richard Brown. Now the general manager of Boca, he is a 33-year veteran of the business. As maître d' at both Pigall's and Maisonette, Brown served everyone from Margaret Thatcher to Martha Stewart. We pulled our chair up to his table.

I was in the Air Force for four years and then went to seminary. I was studying education and archaeology at Cincinnati Bible College when I started working in restaurants. I worked at Buster T. Brown's, Zino's, Victoria Station, and Stouffer's hotel. Being an air traffic controller and running a restaurant were a lot the same. However, air traffic control was life and death and restaurants are lunch and dinner.

Fifteen years at the Maisonette; that was my dream job. The presidents we served and the royalty we served and everyone in the entertainment field or sports field—it was just fascinating. The night President George Bush, number 41, showed up in 1990 was pretty darn exciting. The White House called and said the president will be dining with you in 45 minutes. That was at 6 p.m. and by 6:45 he was there. [Years later] we gave a luncheon for Bill Clinton and we had a month's notice that he was coming and it was much more stressful. With 45 minutes you had no time to plan so you couldn't think about ordering the flowers or having the sidewalk scrubbed. He was just there and you had to deal with it.

I saw a picture of me the other day in my cowboy boots and cowboy hat. At Buster T. Brown's, we were all characters in costume. One waiter dressed as Zorro. I was one of the new guys, I was 22 years old, and everyone else already had their costumes. So I thought, *All right, I'll be Jesse James.*

Last year when Pigall's closed, I had the opportunity to go to Washington, D.C., to be the butler at Blair House, the official guest residence of the White House. It was really exciting, but it didn't quite work out.

If there is a difficult situation, my rule has always been "Give it to me." I kind of enjoy difficult situations and being diplomatic. If someone has an issue or is unhappy, I listen very carefully. I try to never assign blame, but let them know that I'm sorry that the problem has occurred and that I'm going to fix it. —ALYSSA BRANDT

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONATHAN WILLIS

VITAL STATS

OFF DUTY
Some of Brown's favorite haunts include Maury's Tiny Cove for burgers, lunch at Scottie's downtown, and drinks at the Righteous Room. "They have Duval Leroy by the glass. It's a beautiful little French champagne," he says.

Read the entire interview online at www.cincinnatimagazine.com

GENERATION NEXT
In November 2009, Brown's 26-year-old daughter, Lauren, who attended Midwest Culinary Institute and spents seven years at Daveed's, became the executive chef at the University Club downtown—the only female chef in the club's 140-year history.

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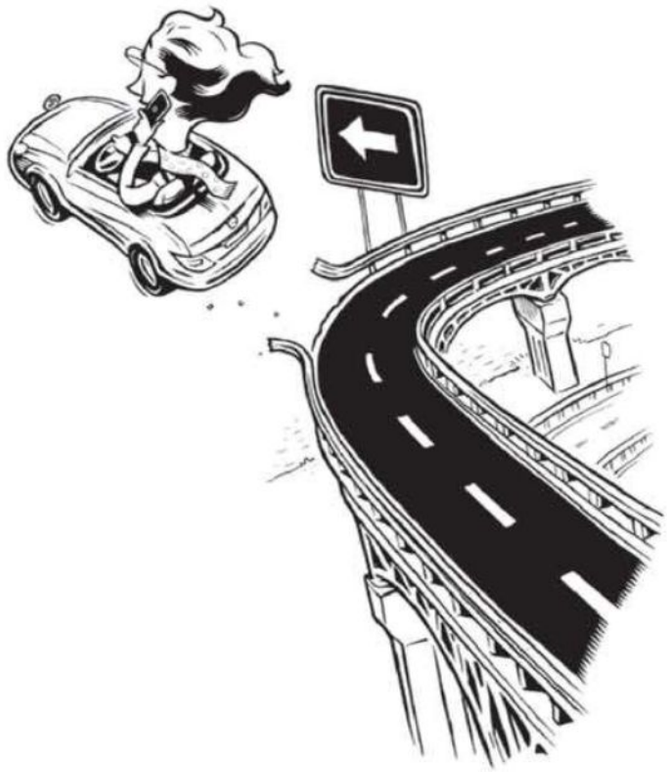

Your Q.C. Conundrums, Answered

Dr. Know

Where's my I-71 ramp? Why can't I find hasenpfeffer? How many Kwik Brothers were there really?

Daily I drive Columbia Parkway, one of the most scenic commutes in the city. But some things about the parkway confuse me. Most perplexing: Why is there no I-71 north access? Very irritating and inconvenient. Also, why is there a sign on the parkway directing airport traffic onto I-471? It doesn't make any sense, except possibly to lure out-of-towners away from the horror that is known as the Brent Spence Bridge.

—Sent from my iPhone

Dear Sent:

Dr. Know has seen you and your iPhone, caressing each other on Columbia Parkway when you should be maintaining a safe distance between your E-Class and the Prius ahead of you. You are so distracted you wouldn't see an exit to I-71 north if one had been built. You are so annoying. Attractive, but annoying.

There is no exit to I-71 north because there would be no way to build one that did not require the elimination of Mt. Adams. And, alas for your self indulgent wish to take 90 seconds off your trip from Mt. Lookout to—where is it you're going that you couldn't get on the highway at Smith/Edwards?—by the time 20th-century traffic engineers considered that solution, Mt. Adams had gentrified well beyond the point that it could be obliterated without causing a stink. Which is why you are forced to put the iPhone to your ear to call your Mom to find out what to do on Eggleston.

The traffic engineers put that I-471 sign up to cause panic. It's their revenge.

Where's the hasenpfeffer? How about the spaetzle and schupfnudel? If this is a German town, why is goetta the only gastronomical evidence of our past?

—Hungry for Answers

Dear Hungry:

If this is a German town, where's the tram? Where are the smooth streets and high-speed autobahnen? Where is the dense but supremely satisfying draft beer?

Can you say deracination? It is no longer politically correct to ascribe character traits to an entire nation, but there does seem to be something to the idea of Teutonic thoroughness. Nine out of 10 anthropologists agree that no immigrants to America are more thoroughly assimilated than the Germans. In most of the country the Germans are invisible. The Mullers are Millers and the Schmidts are Smiths, and they have intermarried with anyone who will have them, dispersing their gene pool from Philadelphia to Petaluma, never looking back to Essen or Ulm. Cincinnati only seems slightly more German than, say, Lexington because there were no Anglo-Saxon equivalents to such surnames as Schmaedeke or Grubauer. But the Schmaedekes and the Grubauers, as soon as they arrived, made it a point to fit in, electrifying their hasenpfeffer crocks so that they could serve the same spiceless muck as their new neighbors.

Goetta survives because it is not biodegradable.

As kids, my twin sister and I *adored* the TV ads for King Kwik Minit Markets that featured a pair of

ILLUSTRATION BY LARS LETARU / (OPPOSITE) PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ

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identical twin brothers. Recently I mentioned this to my mother, and she burst out laughing. She claims the Kwik Brothers were really one guy. Say it ain't so, Dr. Know!

—Crushed in Covington

Dear Crushed:

Your mother sounds like Dr. Know's kind of parent, laughing out loud at your credulity.

She was right, of course. For those readers who have come into the world since the 1970s, it is probably necessary to explain that before there was the metastasis of Walmart and 24-hour Krogers, Queen Citizens in search of AA batteries, suppositories, and skimmed milk at 10:30 p.m. were served in their time of need by King Kwik Minit Markets, a local chain of convenience stores, long since vanquished by bigger retail bullies. King Kwik endured somewhat past its sell-by date thanks to the affable personality of Connecticut-born television producer Mike Tangi, who, through the miracle of chroma-key, sang and danced with himself as the Kwik Brothers in low-budget TV ads, pitching the un-catchy corporate catchline "We're there when you need us." You and your sister will be delighted to learn that Mr. Tangi's day job for many years was the Uncle Al show. He wrote the catchy ditty "Put Your Toys Away."

Perhaps the saddest subplot in the legend of local convenience shopping is the way Cincinnati's needy midnight shoppers have been kept ignorant of the existence of Wawa stores, the fabulous and genuinely convenient mid-Atlantic minimarts that will at 3 a.m. assemble a hoagy to go along with those suppositories and supply you with fresh bananas at the same time.

Dr. Know is Albert Pyle. He is not a real doctor, but he is executive director of the Mercantile Library. Curious about the city's peculiarities? Submit your question by mail or e-mail Dr. Know at drknow@cincinnatimagazine.com

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What's Happening 03/10

1 BALLET GUT Class meets hops at ***Ballet & Beer: Mozart's Requiem,*** a pre-opening-night viewing of the Cincinnati Ballet production, followed by (free!) snacks, beer, and a dancer meet-and-greet. **March 18** *at Cincinnati Ballet Center*

2 MAKE IT A DOUBLE Fermentation festivities ensue at ***The Cincinnati Beer Fest*** and ***The Cincinnati International Wine Festival.*** Eat, drink, and try to get home safely! Wine Festival **March 11–13**; Beer Fest **March 25–28** *at Duke Energy Convention Center*

3 STAGE FLIGHT Hitchcockian brilliance meets laughable absurdity in ***The 39 Steps,*** the tale of an ordinary man suspected of murder. The comedy whodunit thriller features more than 150 characters, played by just four actors. **March 2–14** *at Aronoff Center for the Arts*

4 GOING DEEP The ***Midwest Crystal and Healing Energy Event*** promises shaman education, energy healing sessions, and psychics. Look into our crystal ball… we see fantastic people-watching in your future. **March 19–21** *at Sharonville Convention Center*

5 DOWNRIGHT SWIFTIAN Country icon ***Taylor Swift*** woos crowds of screaming teens with bubblegum-pop charm and radio-ready hit singles about tainted adolescent love. That said, this all-American darling is to be commended for rising above the highfalutin diva-dom of her teen-idol peers. **March 28** *at U.S. Bank Arena*

6 PAWN SHOPPING Flex your brain at the ninth annual ***Queen City Classic Chess Tournament***. Following a blindfold match between International Master Irina Krush and International Grandmaster Gregory Kaidanov, students play five rounds of tête-à-tête tournaments at all playing levels. Check mate! **March 12 & 13** *at Paul Brown Stadium*

ALL CATS ARE GRAY Brit crooner ***David Gray*** first seduced us in his turn-of-the-Millennium "Babylon" days with heartfelt lullabies and gooey odes to melancholy. His 2009 album, *Draw the Line*, brims with similarly somber, bittersweet ballads, and an occasional ode to good vibes. **March 23** *at Taft Theater*

7 SARASOTA WALKING BLUES For their first 2010 spring training game, the ***Cincinnati Reds*** take on the Cleveland Indians in their brand-sparkling-new shared ballpark in Arizona. We can't promise a victory, but we can promise way better weather than Ohio. **March 5** *at Goodyear Ballpark in Goodyear, Arizona*

8

3 PHOTOGRAPH BY CRAIG SCHWARTZ / 5 COURTESY US BANK ARENA / 7 COURTESY CINCINNATI REDS / 8 COURTESY LIVENATION

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Venture Capital

What's the Big Idea?

Silicon Valley? Meet Millicon Valley. A new inventors' contest throws the spotlight—and a little money—at some up-and-coming idea makers.

Can the same fertile ground that civilized the world with better cleaning (the Swiffer) and better Saturday nights (UNO!) offer up some 21st century breakthroughs in, say, technology and medicine? That's the challenge behind Cincinnati Innovates, a contest started last year by Metro Innovation, the law firm Taft Stettinius & Hollister, and CincyTech, a department of the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, to showcase the area's leading brainiacs and spur them to develop their projects here. The reward: development dollars and legal grants to help those ideas get patented. A new Silicon Valley? Maybe not. But the contest's debut year (which begins anew May 1) tripled expectations by attracting 273 entrants. Here are five of our favorites. —IAN ALDRICH

A BETTER FIRE EXTINGUISHER

>> UC graduate student Noel Gauthier says the common fire extinguisher is just too big and too expensive for many parts of the world, where shantytowns and their cardboard dwellings can be devastated in minutes by a few small sparks. "So many lives are lost in those fires," says Gauthier. Which is why he developed the FireStop, a simple-to-use, simple-to-manufacture extinguisher that consists of a cardboard tube and a chemical catalyst that deploys a cloudy retardant. Even better is the production cost: Less than a buck. Gauthier's invention earned him third place and $5,000. He hopes to have a prototype complete later this year.

THE STUDY FRIEND

>> Imagine a world in which Facebook actually made you smarter. Michael Bergman, a project leader at design agency LPK, can. Winner of the contest's top prize—$20,000—his social media application, Numbskull 2.0, is built around the idea that learning can be fun, even when it comes to SAT preparation. Based on Bergman's already-successful board game Numbskull, the app serves up test-like questions, allows students to tap classroom material to quiz each other, and even opens the way for study leagues, where teams can compete. An automatic ticket to Harvard it's not, but hey, it may mean a little less wincing when your kid says no to those state schools.

BOOK 'EM DANNO

>> Dan Clifton wants to modernize the common handcuff, and along the way allow police to make safer, easier arrests. His invention, the OX, which earned the 2009 UC graduate a $2,500 patent grant, incorporates sensors that close the rings automatically once they're around a wrist and a motorized cord that retracts to bring the hands together. That means police don't have to manually put suspects' arms behind their backs. Which lessens the chance for a struggle, says Clifton, a Cincinnati native now living and working in San Francisco. "This helps the officers and it holds the rights of the suspects because no excessive force is needed."

FULL SCALE ANALYSIS

>> Phil Gettinger and Amro Kamel are well aware of the issues facing diabetic patients. Both 2008 UC biomedical engineering graduates have close family members dealing with the disease. "My grandpa lost both legs because of foot ulcers," says Kamel, who with Gettinger, founded Diabetic LLC, a Covington-based biomedical engineering firm. Gettinger and Kamel's UlcerScale, the recipient of the $1,000 patent prize, helps identify the risks by analyzing the foot's skin temperature, a harbinger of diabetic sores. The wider the temperature difference between similar spots on each foot, the higher the chances are for infections. And with the early detection, the more likely something can be done to prevent them.

ONE FOR ALL

>> Ryan Eder isn't a fan of most pieces of workout equipment. If you're not 20, buff, or of a certain height, it can be a struggle to use many of them, says the 2006 UC graduate, who works for an industrial firm in Columbus. That prompted Eder to develop the design for the Access, an all-in-one workout system that features locking straps to hold a wheelchair in place, two arms that can rotate 180 degrees, and an electronic interface that changes weight amounts with the press of a button. "The goal is to bridge the gap and create something that accommodates everyone," says Eder.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY VAULT 49

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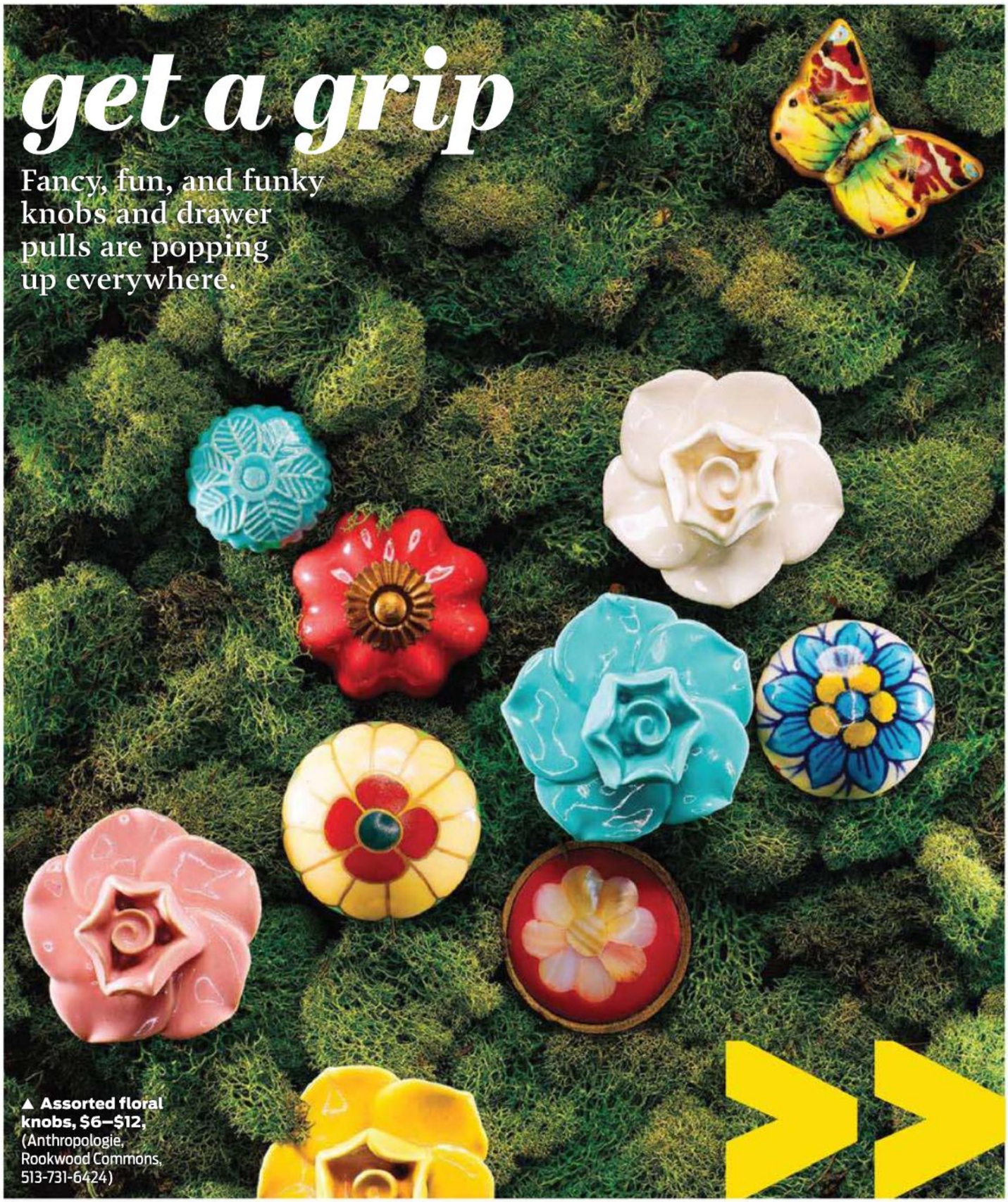
RADAR

edited by KATHERINE L. SONTAG & AMANDA BOYD WALTERS

get a grip

Fancy, fun, and funky knobs and drawer pulls are popping up everywhere.



▲ **Assorted floral knobs, $6–$12,** (Anthropologie, Rookwood Commons, 513-731-6424)

PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN KURTZ

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NECESSITIES

1. Silver-tone fork and knife drawer pulls, $7.42 each (www.michaelaram.com)

2. Card catalog pull, $8 (Anthropologie, Rookwood Commons, 513-731-6424)

3. Traditional clear glass drawer knobs in amber and green, $9–$11 (Restoration Hardware, Kenwood Towne Centre, 513-984-0151)

4. Two-inch vintage glass and brass doorknob, $20–$25 a pair (Wooden Nickel, Over-the-Rhine, 513-241-2985)

5. Acrylic round knobs, $7.50 (Bona Decorative Hardware, Oakley, 513-321-7877)

6. Hello, Goodbye door knob, $42 (Anthropologie)

7. Schaub Select solid brass lion head drawer pull, $17.98 (Keidel, Kenwood, 513-984-9100)

8. Silver-Tone Bee Knob, $5.48 (www.michaelaram.com)

9. Square glass knobs, $11 (Bona Decorative Hardware)

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN KURTZ, SOURCED AND STYLED BY ALYSSA BRANDT

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The Address

1 Roebling's Way

It's the most glorious condo in town. So why is it still empty?

The striking profile of The Ascent at Roebling's Bridge carves into Northern Kentucky's skyline like a giant glass apostrophe, sparking conversation and curiosity. Travel to the 7,400-square-foot penthouse condo—encompassing the 20th, 21st, and 22nd floors; the very point of this punctuation mark in Covington's profile—and you *really* get an appreciation for the high life.

Stepping inside, the first thing you notice is the river. Thanks to floor-to-ceiling windows, a scan from right to left yields panoramic views of downtown Cincinnati, Covington, and the rolling hills beyond each. The space is free of fixtures, flooring, and furnishings, ready to be designed to a buyer's specifications. Use your imagination (while you're at it, imagine you have the $5,450,900 asking price, which includes a "finish allowance" to get the decorating started), and it's easy to picture life up here. The first floor has two master suites; the second floor (accessible by stairs or—wait for it—private elevator) holds the office, kitchen, living room, and a terrace. The third floor is like a crow's nest, with a view of the floors below and space for a lounging area, wet bar, and home theater setup.

Ascent designer Daniel Libeskind has said his inspiration came from the sweeping lines of the Roebling Suspension Bridge. "He wanted to create a building that would bring air, light, and the surrounding environment together," says Deb Vicchiarelli, senior vice president and chief marketing officer of Corporex, developer of The Ascent. "With the shape of the building, he ties together the low-rise buildings of the older neighborhood with the high-rises of the modern city."

Whether due to skittish buyers, reluctant lenders, or a contemporary style that's too edgy for those who could afford it, the penthouse is still for sale after almost two years on the market. There are no plans to carve up the unit. "We are confident someone wants to own one of the most spectacular entertaining and living spaces in the Americas," says Vicchiarelli. She continues to show the space regularly, and she still feels the future owner is out there—perhaps a C-level executive, empty nesters yearning to be free of home maintenance issues, or as she says, anyone wishing "to live inside a work of art." In the meantime, this extraordinary space will enjoy the best view in town all by itself. —ELIZABETH BRONSON

DEVELOPMENT WATCH

Cincinnati State's Programs Go Green

>> It's been just a few years since administrators at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College got religion on the issue of sustainability, but in that short span the school has been thoroughly converted. Students can choose from a long list of environmentally minded majors and certificates, and the school's zeal has helped it emerge as a leader in sustainability education. Late last year the sustainable-design program was awarded a $10,000 incentive grant from the U.S. Green Building Council's Excellence in Green Building Education—one of only three schools, and the only community college, chosen from more than 150 applicants. Cincinnati State's program was one of the first in the U.S. to offer a complete set of training courses in LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), and the school was the first in Ohio to offer a major in renewable energy.

Program enrollment is soaring, with students from age 18 to 68 signing up. "For the unemployed, they want employable skills as quickly as possible," says Ralph Wells, certificate chair for the sustainable design and construction certificate program. "And the students who are employed but don't have these skills are going to have to get them."

Local companies are benefitting as well. Larry Feist, who oversees the renewable-energy major in the Electro-Mechanical Engineering Technologies division, sends co-op students out to companies of all sizes to help them become more energy-efficient and convert to renewable sources of energy. He envisions former manufacturing plants in the area retooled to produce wind turbines and solar-thermal components. "We have the infrastructure in place and we need to exploit that," Feist says. "I look out at the Queensgate valley and I see a golden opportunity."

—JULIE IRWIN ZIMMERMAN

EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPH BY BITTERBREDT / INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPH BY MILES WOLF / ILLUSTRATION BY PETER & MARIA HOEY

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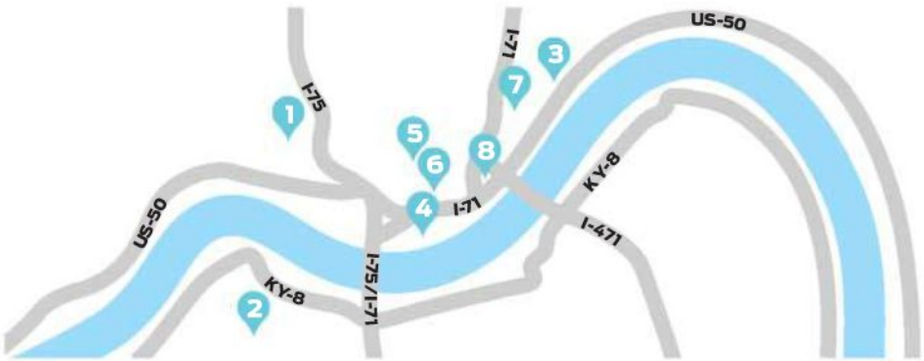

museum shops

Souvenirs? Sure, but go for the first-rate work by local artists, unique jewelry, great toys, and contemporary accessories.

FREEDOM CENTER GIFT SHOP

1. Store to Explore
Union Terminal is home to multiple museums and multiple shops, but this is our fave. The fun quotient is so high kids won't realize most of the gear is educational. There are Velociraptor skull casts and break-your-own geodes, plus perfectly gross science sets, including Bubbly Stomach Science from Curiosity Kits, which is bound to shock squeamish moms. All age groups are covered with plush Uglydolls, Heirloom dolls, plastic dinos, and bins of allowance-friendly buys. And the local book section is the best we've seen.
1301 Western Ave., (513) 287-7022, www.cincymuseum.org

STORE TO EXPLORE

2. Behringer-Crawford Museum
Northern Kentucky crafters and authors are the draw in Devou Park. We found *A History of Northern Kentucky's Long Forgotten Neighborhood Movie Theaters* and plenty of Arcadia Publishing's Images of America visual histories. The less bookish can pick up Jane E. Bresser's porcelain cabbage leaf plates and prints by Mary Bunning, the senator's wife.
1600 Montague Rd., Covington, (859) 491-4003, www.bcmuseum.org

STORE TO EXPLORE

STORE TO EXPLORE

FREEDOM CENTER

3. Krohn Conservatory
This nook in the corner of the greenhouse stocks plants and green-thumb gear, but adding the hand-blown and etched glass tableware from Neusole Glassworks of Walnut Hills was inspired—it's beautiful against the greenery. Not to miss: *Natural Beauty: Arts & Crafts From Krohn Crafters*, a how-to book on the popular hand-made Krohn tree ornaments.
1501 Eden Park Dr., (513) 421-5707, www.cincinnatiparks.com/krohn-conservatory/index.shtml

4. National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Gift Shop
It's a global bazaar here. Accessorize yourself with intricate Thai jewelry, hand-beaded Kenyan earrings, or Guatemalan beaded cuffs. Then dress up your home with hand-woven Ethiopian textiles, ceremonial Ndebele dolls from South Africa, or woven jipijoppa critters from Bolivia.
50 E. Freedom Way, downtown, (513) 333-7738

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS SMITH

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CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

5. The Library Friends Shop

You don't have to love reading to shop this mezzanine storefront, but it helps you appreciate the Bookopoly board game, classic author finger puppets, and miniature newspaper front page pins by Carolyn Forsman. And judging by the Nancy Pearl Librarian action figure with "shushing" action, the Love Gun that catapults miniature Cupids up to 15 feet, and the literary lushes shot glasses, someone's got a sense of humor. *800 Vine St., downtown, (513) 369-6920, www.cincinnatilibrary.org*

6. Contemporary Arts Center

Modern thinkers have plenty to keep them entranced: sleek Alessi Bettina teacups in a swirl of porcelain, Georg Jensen stainless steel "elephant" bottle openers, and stainless steel cutlery with fluid lines designed by CAC architect Zaha Hadid (it's striking to look at but a tad unwieldy). And what house doesn't need magnetic measuring spoons, a solar-powered disco ball, and a pop quiz clock that tells time by solving math equations? *44 E. Sixth St., downtown, (513) 345-8400, www.store.contemporaryartscenter.org*

CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM

7. Cincinnati Art Museum

Yes, they've got mini Chihulys, but check out the color-shot earthenware from Mustardseed & Moonshine. And the jewelry is great: crystal Poppi rings on stretchy silver bands; Japanese Washi paper earrings by Legend Design; and hand-sewn necklaces by Dori Csengeri (above) that combine embroidery, crystals, beading, and wood. *953 Eden Park Dr., (513) 639-2959, www.cincinnatiartmuseum.org*

CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM

8. Shop at the Taft

The signature yellow and blue hand-painted majolica ceramic ware from Deruta, Italy, is showcased nicely in this sunny spot, but be sure to scan the shelves for the magical, intricate decoupage creations by local artist Alice Heyn Balterman and the one-of-a-kind silk and felted woolen purses from Rising Tide, made in Nepal. Other stars include Michael Dorsa's silver pendants and earrings, yoga-inspired Satya lotus jewelry, and stylishly retro decorative tiles by Xenia Taler. *316 Pike St., downtown, (513) 352-5138, www.taftmuseum.org*

—JOY W. KRAFT

CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM

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Fashion Export

ready to wear

John Bartlett takes menswear to the next level with his own private label.

As a teenager at Summit Country Day School in the early 1980s, John Bartlett didn't know that his willingness to push fashion boundaries would aid him when he became a menswear designer years later. Summit required that all students wear the same uniform, but each day the Anderson Township native found ways to make his just a little different, à la *Gossip Girl*. He shortened his ties, wore polo shirts instead of button downs, bought accessories from local thrift stores—anything that would help him stand out in a sea of Brooks Brothers prep.

"Maybe because I wore a school uniform every day, clothing became a tool for expression and individuality," he says. "I was always trying to find a way to stay within the rules, but still kind of break them."

Today, Bartlett mixes the sensibility he found in and around his hometown with accessories and details that re-envision ideas of masculinity in men's clothing. "A lot of my fashion inspiration and style direction comes from classic Midwestern menswear," he says.

After graduating from Harvard University with a degree in sociology in 1985, the would-be designer moved to New York to take night classes at the Fashion Institute of Technology. He worked odd jobs during the day—everything from selling clothes at an exclusive Giorgio Armani boutique to working as a stylist's assistant. Bartlett's time at the FIT landed him apprenticeships with designers Willi Smith, Ronaldus Shamask, and Bill Robinson, and he started his own label in 1992.

The 46-year-old finished up a two-year stint with Liz Claiborne reviving its menswear line, Claiborne by John Bartlett, shortly before both it and the company's women's lines were sold to J.C. Penney last October. He is now concentrating on further extending his own brand. "I've done women's but I prefer menswear because it's something that I understand better," he says. "Working with the parameters of shirt-jacket-pants has always inspired me." — AIESHA D. LITTLE

Find Bartlett's designs at www.johnbartlettny.com

DRESSING UP

STARS AND STRIPES
Cotton windowpane shirt with Italian wool pinstriped waistcoat and trousers. Bartlett says: "This fabric and outfit was inspired by Robert Redford in *The Sting*."

HOT COAT-URE
Jacquard shirt, Shetland plaid coat, and striped stovepipe pants. Bartlett says: "Amazing coat with subtle details. The topper is one of my favorite pieces."

HIGH-MINDED
Scottish cashmere striped turtleneck with high-waisted wool Shetland pants and suspenders. Bartlett says: "One of the hallmarks of my designs is to mix patterns such as the stripes and plaid in this look."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GREG VAUGHAN

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With exciting news being made every day, we are writing a new chapter in a 231-year-old story. The PGA TOUR's newest event, The Greenbrier Classic, will be held July 26–August 1, 2010. The elegant Tavern Casino adds to the 50 activities offered at our AAA Five Diamond resort. Our new steakhouse, Prime 44 West, honoring NBA legend and native West Virginian Jerry West, is now serving guests. And our new 80,000 square foot entertainment venue — complete with new restaurants, shops, a lounge with live music, and our elegant Monte Carlo-style casino — will open spring 2010.

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The Itinerary

buzzer beaters

As March Madness begins, plan your trip to the Final Four in Indianapolis.

Whether Final Four tickets are an impossible dream or an item on the next credit card bill, basketball fans can celebrate (or mourn) in Indianapolis during Final Four weekend April 3–5. Even in this walk-worthy downtown, with its absence of big-city stress and taxi jams, Final Four crowds can strain even the most polite Midwesterner. Planning a few stops on and off the beaten path will help you experience Hoosier Hospitality at its most welcoming.

Oakleys Bistro

Fans hungry for a comforting meal will delight in this north side foodie hangout 15 minutes from downtown, where Chef Steven Oakley injects comfort foods with French influence. His menu includes highbrow takes on macaroni and cheese, meatloaf, waffles, even corndogs. For a celebratory night on the town, start with pan-seared diver's scallops, which arrive caramelized but still tender, followed by barbecue-glazed meatloaf. Paired with a bottle of "The Sum" (a blended red from the 75 Wine Company) and followed by crème brûlée, victory might just taste a bit sweeter. Feeling less than celebratory? Skulk up to the bar and order an obscene number of shrimp corndogs with a stiff drink. Oakleys boasts gourmet dining sans stuffiness, so come as you are and don't be afraid to order the mac-n-goat cheese with pesto. We know you want it.

NCAA Hall of Champions

For the sports-obsessed, and those just wondering exactly how fast a 100 mph tennis serve *really* feels, there's the NCAA Hall of Champions (pictured above). With a kid-friendly mix of interactive exhibits and history covering 23 NCAA-sanctioned sports, the hall attracts trivia buffs to its first floor kiosks with up-to-the-minute stats. More energetic visitors will be drawn to interactive displays on the second floor. Kimberly Harms of the Indianapolis Convention & Visitors Association calls it "Wii on steroids." Players can fly downhill on snow skis or throw a perfect spiral to a gridiron teammate. Impromptu shoot-outs often crop up on the half court. Floor markers reference winning shots from NCAA basketball superstars like Christian Laettner, whose 1992 buzzer beater thrilled Duke fans during the East regional finals (sorry, Wildcat Nation).

Indianapolis Motor Speedway and Hall of Fame Museum

The speedway offers visitors access to the track raced by generations of Indy 500 and Brickyard 400 drivers. Sit in a winning Indy car and take an up-close look at historic race cars, trophies, and scoring equipment. Bus tours around the track are available for a few extra bucks, or splurge on the grounds tour. For $25 you'll visit the timing-and-scoring suite, Gasoline Alley garage, and Victory Podium, which are otherwise staff- and team-only zones. Kiss the "Yard of Bricks" at the finish line for a taste of Indy 500 tradition as the Speedway celebrates its centennial.

Final Four Friday and Reese's College All-Star Game

If you're dying to catch a game, but forgot to grab tickets in time, head to Lucas Oil Stadium on Friday. Final Four team practices and an all-star game that afternoon are free to the public. Coaches will address fans after each session and (hold your breath) a few lucky fans will win tickets to the championship games. Each practice lasts 50 minutes followed by a 10 minute break. Didn't win the freebies? Watch top

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF NCAA HALL OF CHAMPIONS

Oakleys Bistro
(317) 824-1231,
www.oakleysbistro.com

NCAA Hall of Champions
(317) 916-4255,
www.ncaahallofchampions.org

Indianapolis Motor Speedway
(317) 492-6784, www.indianapolismotorspeedway.com

Slippery Noodle Inn
(317) 631-6974,
www.slipperynoodleinn.com

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male NCAA basketball players compete in a free All-Star game. Friday festivities continue with Bracket Town, a basketball fan fest that runs all weekend at the Indiana Convention Center. Fans can enjoy video game tournaments, autograph sessions, and a slam dunk court.

Slippery Noodle Inn

Few bars can say they're in a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This local favorite was once a Dillinger gang haunt, bordello, and a stop on the Underground Railroad. Today it's Indy's oldest bar and the best place to hear blues greats lay down a groove. Artists including Tommy Castro, 10,000 Maniacs, and Tab Benoit have jammed on the Noodle's dual stages. It's hard to miss the Noodle, which takes up half a city block and boasts live music seven nights a week.

Where to Stay

Hoping to land a last-minute reservation for the games may be the true definition of March Madness. But flexible weekenders could score a room as sore losers head home. The Staybridge Suites (317-536-7500) and Holiday Inn Express (317-822-6400) next to Lucas Oil Stadium are convenient and a cut above typical chain hotels, but beware minimum stay requirements. The nearby Omni Severin (317-634-6664) is just a skywalk away from Nordstrom and other shopping. Other top choices include the downtown Marriott (317-822-3500) and the Westin (317-262-8100). No luck? Head to the I-465 loop around the city or check visitindy.com/finalfour for vacancies citywide. Here's hoping your team makes it all the way to "One Shining Moment."

—ROBIN DONOVAN

Final Four Friday and Reese's College All-Star Game
www.ncaa.com/finalfour

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Social DATEBOOK

1. The Greater Cincinnati World Affairs Council held a December luncheon for internationally-oriented organizations and businesses. *Cincinnati Magazine* was a program sponsor. One outcome of the luncheon was the development of an "international gateway" website that provides a database of area international organizations and a listing of their upcoming events. Visit the site at www.globalcincinnati.org. Joe Dehner, Dan Lincoln, Linda Wuest, Scott Kuehn and Erika Dockery, executive director of the local World Affairs Council.

2. Steven Reineke (second from right), associate conductor of the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, with Betsy Wolfe, Ben Utech and Eric Kunze at the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's "Masquerade Ball" held on New Year's Eve.

3. Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's Board of Directors Vice-Chair Melody Sawyer Richardson, Steven Reineke and Julie Poe at the "Masquerade Ball."

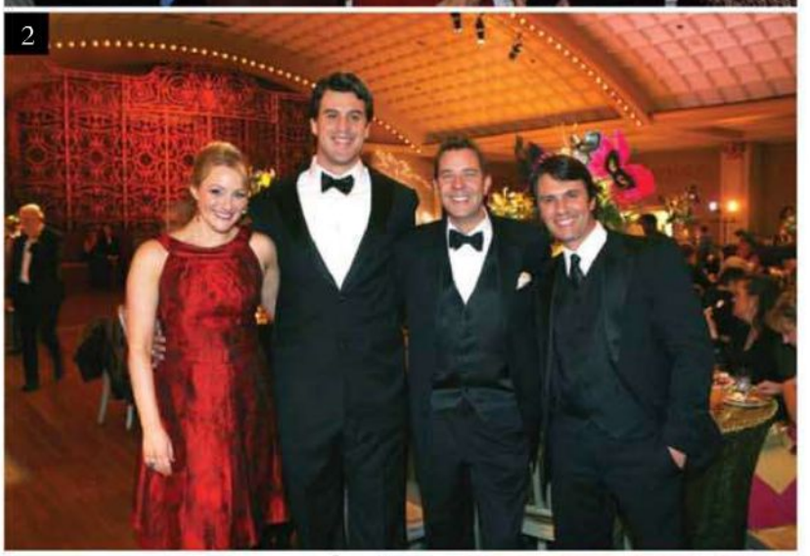
4. Alumni from the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's (LLS) Team in Training program gathered at The 20th Century Theatre in Oakley to celebrate another successful year of completing endurance events. Team in Training participants raised nearly $900,000 for LLS in 2009.

5. Team in Training alumni Jenni & Jim Pustinger and Cheryl Koopman. Jim is president of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Tri-State Chapter Board of Trustees.

6. Every time Shayne Graham kicked a successful field goal during the Cincinnati Bengals' 2009-2010 season, Gold Star Chili donated $300 worth of canned chili to the Freestore Foodbank. The final tally – a donation of more than two tons of canned chili. Gold Star Chili CEO Mike Rohrkemper and Freestore Foodbank CEO John Young.

7. The Junior League of Cincinnati will celebrate its 90th anniversary on Saturday, March 20 with a gala entiteld "From White Gloves to Work Gloves." Visit www.JLCincinnati.org for event details. Amelia Crutcher, co-chair of the Junior League's 90th anniversary year, with committee members Kelly Lyle, Katie Hayden, Linda Smith and Danielle Deja.

8. Marty Humes and Kathryn Balnes are co-chairs of the Junior League's "From White Gloves to Work Gloves" gala.



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15 minutes

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAULA NORTON

Cincinnati Magazine and Richter & Phillips welcomed over 150 guests to the 7th annual Super Lawyers and Rising Stars reception. Richter & Phillips added a "shop for a cause" bonus to the evening by donating 10% of each jewelry or watch purchase to ProKids. Chef Renee Schuler and the "eat well" catering team served creative comfort foods including mini cheeseburgers and mac-n-cheese pops. Ketel One and Nuvo were the featured drinks. Event sponsorship was provided by The Greater Cincinnati Foundation.

Julie Shifman and Kathy Merchant

Jan Frankel and Eric Holzapfel

Michael Lyon and Dan & Barb Bennie

Amy Cheney and Suzanne Rohs

Nancy Lawson, Joseph Dilts and Kimberly Beck

DJ Thomas, Lauren McCarroll, Tanya Ehn and Dr. Tim Ehn

Cincinnati Magazine welcomed the 2010 class of "Top Doctors" to Porsche of the Village, Maserati of Cincinnati, and Volvo of Cincinnati. During the reception, two lucky guests won a chance to drive a 2010 Maserati Quattroporte and a 2010 Porsche Panamera for a weekend. Event sponsorship was provided by PHS: Consulting and Management Services, Hospice of Cincinnati and appointments. Catering by "eat well" with desserts from Taste of Belgium. Beverages sponsored by Ketel One and Nuvo.

Wilma Jennings, Jeff Vielhauer and Nancy Ralston

Brandy Donohoo, Dr. Hugh Gloster, Jr. and Beth Deering

Drs. Michael & Karen Columbus

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TO LEADING OUR TEAM TO
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SPRING 2010

THE LINDNER CENTER

AT THE CHRIST HOSPITAL QUARTERLY REPORT

(INSIDE)

A message from Dr. Kereiakes.....pg. 2

The Truth About Aspirin Use.....pg. 3

Should you be taking a daily dose to prevent heart attack and stroke? New research helps answer that question.

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A message from Dr. Kereiakes

Dear Readers,

Welcome to *The Lindner Center Quarterly Report*, a publication dedicated to providing you with information to keep you healthy and informed regarding leading-edge developments in the treatment of cardiovascular disease.

In this report, Dr. Ian J. Sarembock will examine important new data regarding the use of one of medicine's oldest drugs, aspirin. Does "an aspirin a day" really "keep the doctor away"? Are the benefits and risk of aspirin therapy similar for both men and women? These questions, among others, are addressed by Dr. Sarembock.

In addition, you will gain a better understanding of the use of aspirin for "primary" versus "secondary" prevention. "Primary" refers to the prevention of a first cardiovascular event (death, heart attack or stroke) in individuals with no known or previously evident cardiovascular disorders. Conversely, "secondary" refers to the prevention of recurrent events among individuals with a known or previously established cardiovascular disorder. Because the risk for cardiovascular events differs markedly between individuals with and without previously established cardiovascular disease, the potential for benefit with aspirin therapy differs as well. Furthermore, any benefit of aspirin treatment must be weighed against the risk for bleeding events, which may also vary between these patient groups. Dr. Sarembock will provide specific recommendations for aspirin use from careful analysis of very recently published medical literature.

As always, we urge you to discuss aspirin treatment and your specific risk/benefit profile with your personal physician. We hope this information will benefit you or someone you love.

In good health,

Dean J. Kereiakes, MD
Medical Director, The Christ Hospital Heart and Vascular Center;
Medical Director of The Lindner Center

The Christ Hospital

SPRING 2010

THE LINDNER CENTER
AT THE CHRIST HOSPITAL QUARTERLY REPORT

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The Lindner Center Quarterly Report's mission is to educate the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky community about heart and cardiovascular research, treatment and prevention.

The Lindner Center for Research and Education is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The Christ Hospital Heart and Vascular Center.

For further information, please contact us at (513) 585-1777.

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WRITTEN BY IAN J. SAREMBOCK, MB, CHB, MD

The Truth About Aspirin Use

Should you be taking a daily dose to prevent heart attack and stroke? New research helps answer that question.

Like modern medicine itself, aspirin's use for pain and fever relief goes back to the time of Hippocrates, who used the bark and leaves of willow plants to create a medicinal powder. By 1829, scientists discovered that it was the compound salicin in the willow plants that was responsible for pain relief. However, salicylic acid irritates the stomach, so scientists searched for a means of buffering the compound.

The first person to find an effective buffer was the French chemist Charles Frederic Gerhardt in 1853, but he had no desire to market it. In 1899, chemist Felix Hoffmann rediscovered Gerhardt's formula while working for the German company Bayer. Hoffmann prepared some of the formula and gave it to his father who was suffering from the pain of arthritis. Following good results, Hoffmann persuaded Bayer to market aspirin as a new wonder drug.

Patented on February 27, 1900, aspirin was first sold as a powder. In 1915, the first aspirin tablets were introduced. Over the next century, this medicine would fall in and out of favor and become the subject of thousands of publications. A crucial piece of research regarding aspirin came in the early 1970s, when British scientist John Vane showed how aspirin works. Vane and colleagues were awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1982 for their seminal work on the mechanism of action of aspirin.

Because of its blood-thinning properties, aspirin is well documented to be a highly effective and potentially life-saving therapy for patients with cardiovascular disease, both when taken preventatively and during acute cardiac events. The key role of anti-platelet (blood-thinning) therapy for the secondary prevention of heart attack and stroke is firmly established for high-risk patients—it has been shown to reduce the risk of a cardiovascular event by as much as 25 percent.

Although it is considered a miracle drug for secondary prevention, the benefit of aspirin therapy for primary prevention—in other words, for individuals without established cardiovascular disease—has been less clear. A landmark British Medical Journal publication in 2002 concluded that, "for most healthy individuals, for whom the risk of a vascular event is likely to be substantially less than 1 percent per year, daily aspirin may well be inappropriate."[1] Despite this conclusion, aspirin use in primary prevention has been widespread; in the United States alone there are tens of millions of low-risk patients taking daily aspirin.

The most recent meta-analysis from six primary-prevention trials reported by the Antithrombotic Trialists (ATT) Collaboration published in *Lancet* (May 2009) again suggests no clear benefit of aspirin for primary prevention and alerts the medical community to potential harm.[2] These investigators collectively analyzed pooled data from major prevention trials involving 95,000 low- or average-risk patients comparing aspirin therapy with no aspirin (control group).

EXAMINING THE DATA

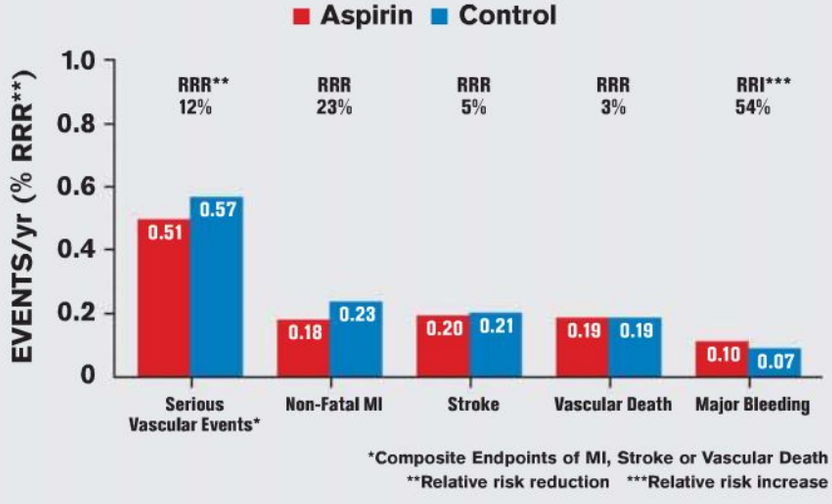
During 6.4 years of follow-up, 1,671 vascular events occurred in the aspirin group and 1,883 in the control group, which translates to 0.51 percent of the aspirin group versus 0.57 of the control group. This means the aspirin group was .88 percent less likely than the control group to experience a vascular event. The aspirin group was also 18 percent less likely than the control group to experience a coronary event.

The risk of stroke, however, was not significantly reduced with aspirin. In fact, the aspirin group was 32 percent more likely than the control group to suffer a hemorrhagic stroke. Further, aspirin was not associated with a significant reduction in death due to vascular causes. And, aspirin increased the incidence of major gastrointestinal (GI) and other extra-cranial bleeding (Figure 1).

Interestingly, the comparative reduction in vascular events was similar in all subgroups and did not depend significantly on age, gender, smoking history, blood pressure, total cholesterol, body-mass index, history of diabetes or predicted risk of coronary heart disease. The authors concluded that there was no significant trend in the comparative effects of aspirin for people at very low, low, moderate or even high estimated risk of coronary heart disease.

In addition, most subjects in these trials were not receiving cholesterol-lowering therapy with statins, which would have reduced both heart attacks and stroke with little associated hazard. Noting that generic statins are now widely available at low cost, the authors suggest that because of efficacy and safety, statin use for primary prevention could be preferred to primary prevention with aspirin alone. If statins can reduce the risk of vascular disease by about 50 percent, the additional benefit provided by the aspirin might be only half as large as suggested by the primary-prevention trials, but the risk of bleeding would still remain. Thus, the authors

FIGURE 1



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concluded that the current trials do not appear to justify general guidelines that advocate the routine use of aspirin in apparently healthy individuals.

In a gender-specific analysis of the same six primary prevention trials, aspirin was associated with a decrease in major cardiovascular events in both women and men. In women, aspirin use reduced the overall occurrence of stroke and ischemic stroke but not hemorrhagic stroke, heart attack, cardiovascular mortality or all-cause mortality. In men, aspirin was associated with a reduction in heart attack, but not overall stroke or ischemic stroke, and there was an increase in the occurrence of hemorrhagic stroke. Also, in men, aspirin had no effect on cardiovascular mortality or all-cause mortality. Aspirin therapy increased the risk of major bleeding in both women and men. The authors concluded that although treatment with aspirin resulted in about 3 fewer cardiovascular events per 1,000 women and 4 cardiovascular events per 1,000 men, the benefit was offset by an additional 2.5 major bleeding events per 1,000 women and 3 major bleeding events per 1,000 men.

This analysis, which represents the most comprehensive compilation of evidence from primary prevention aspirin trials to date, demonstrates the challenges of considering aspirin for primary prevention for low-risk patients. Aspirin use does reduce the risk of cardiovascular events, but at the cost of a small but clinically relevant increase in bleeding events. Importantly, this balance of risk and benefit did not vary by age, gender or other clinical characteristics.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS

As Dr. Harlan Krumholz stated in a commentary on the studies (*Journal Watch Cardiology* May 28, 2009): "These results challenge guidelines that endorse the use of aspirin for primary prevention as a general public health policy and reinforce the need to take each patient's preferences, goals and risks into account when deciding whether aspirin therapy is appropriate for cardiovascular risk reduction."

In an update on aspirin use for primary prevention of cardiovascular events published by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), the authors conclude that aspirin does reduce the number of cardiovascular events in patients without known cardiovascular disease.[3] Men experienced fewer heart attacks and women experienced fewer ischemic strokes. Aspirin does not seem to affect death rates in either men or women. Importantly, the use of aspirin for primary prevention increases the risk for major bleeding events, primarily gastrointestinal bleeding, in both men and women. Men have an increased risk for hemorrhagic stroke with aspirin use.

The dose of aspirin varied between studies, which means physicians do not have clinical data to arrive at an optimal dose for primary prevention. In addition, several of the randomized controlled trials were conducted within populations of health professionals (doctors and nurses), who have greater knowledge of and access to routine health care. This potentially limits the ability to apply the study results to the general population.

After careful review of the evidence, USPSTF task force chair Dr. Ned Calonge (University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver) commented: "The problem is that if you take both genders and throw them together, because the women don't get benefit from [heart attack], you lose the stroke benefit, and because men don't get a benefit from stroke, you lose the [heart attack] benefit."

Still, the USPSTF does not plan to revise its guidance based on the more recent ATT meta-analysis. The USPSTF believes that if cardiovascular events are separated by gender and age groups into strokes versus heart attacks, the evidence remains very strong that there is substantial benefit from taking preventative aspirin. Physicians should consider both the 10-year heart-disease risk for men and the GI bleed risk in different age categories and pick the cutoff point at which the averted events from heart disease offset or are greater than the number of GI bleeding events. USPSTF risk calculation tables for women and stroke are also available.

So, what are we to conclude? The balance of efficacy and safety is particularly important when making recommendations for patients who appear to be disease-free—there should be strong evidence that benefits exceed risks by an appropriate margin. And the current evidence suggests that aspirin's balance of benefits versus risks may be more delicate than previously thought. That means the benefits and risks should be carefully considered for each patient, particularly with regards to the presence of risk factors for vascular disease and gastrointestinal bleeding. The final decision about whether or not take aspirin for primary prevention must be made by the physician and patient together, after all the evidence has been evaluated. ■

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3. U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. Aspirin for the prevention of cardiovascular disease: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. Ann Intern Med 2009; 150: 396–404.

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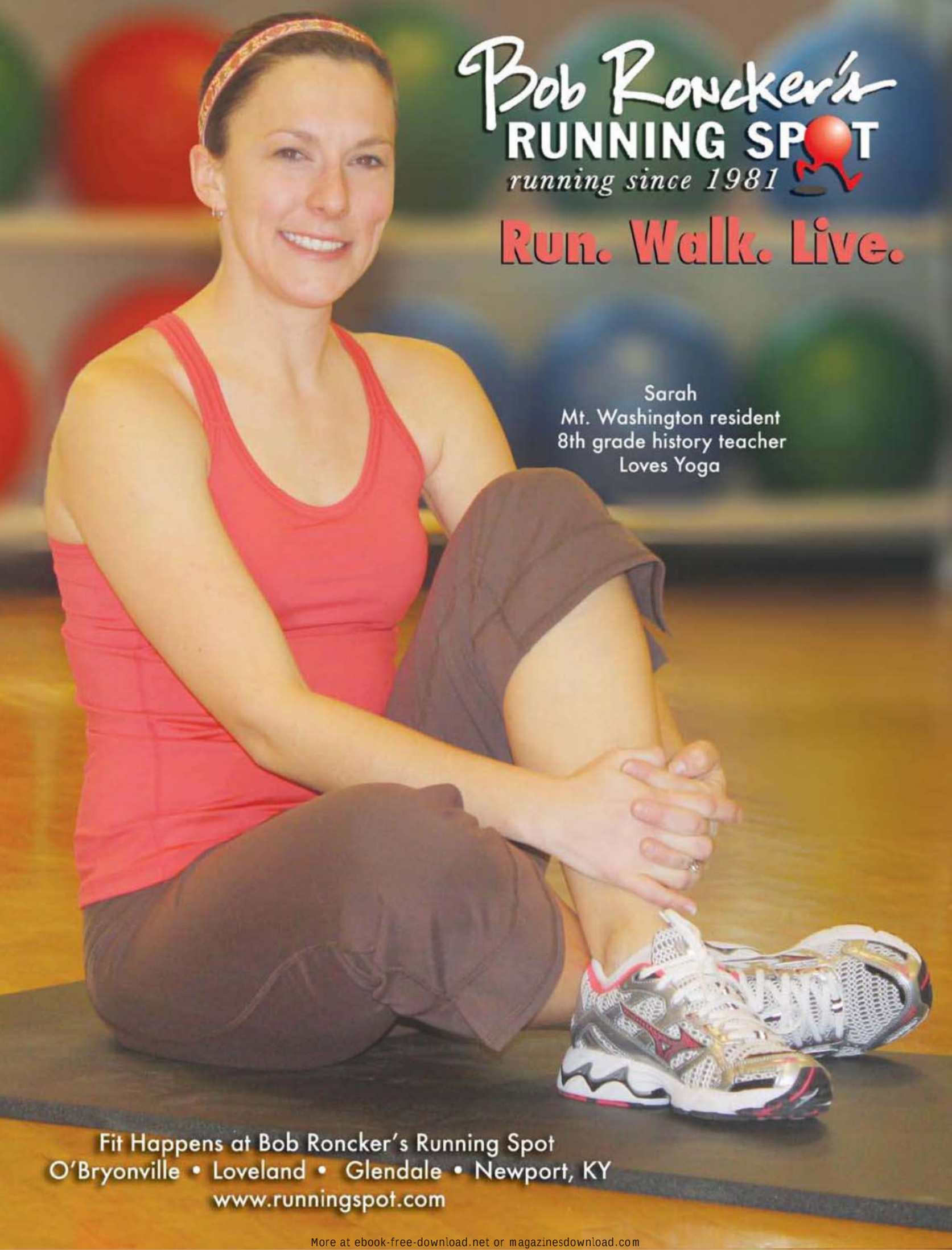

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Oh, Shut Your Pie Hole

It's time someone stood up for non-foodies. And I'm just the boor to do it.

You're holding in your hand my least favorite issue of this magazine: the annual review of the best restaurants in town. When this issue arrives in our mailbox, my wife, Angie, tears into it as if there were a $100 bill hidden inside. She *oohs* and *ahhs* at the beautiful photography, dramatically licks her lips, and even kisses a page here and there. These theatrics are for my benefit. That's because Angie's a big-time foodie. I am not even a small-time foodie. Angie enjoys cooking gourmet meals and trying new restaurants, while I regard food pretty much the way I regard oxygen: I know I need it to survive but I have no interest in talking about it. This month, however, I'm making an exception because I feel morally obligated to stand up for my kind: the non-foodies. We're mad as hell and not very hungry and we're not going to take it sitting down anymore!

I see that look on your face—don't try to hide it. Foodies are dumbfounded by non-foodies. So much so that foodies will sometimes react with shock and horror if you inform them that a steak from Ponderosa isn't that bad, or that much different from a similar cut at Morton's. They take it personally! As if you just verbally assaulted their beloved grandmother or something!

At first they think you're joking. Then they think you somehow mistook Ponderosa for Jeff Ruby's. When they realize that you were neither joking nor mistaken, they will try to convert you. They'll ask: *Have you ever had steak prepared in such-and-such a way? Or served alongside this-or-that? Have you ever eaten a steak here or there?* When you answer in the affirmative but continue to claim that food worship is way overrated, they wonder if you have some sort of medical condition. *Could it be that your taste buds don't work, giving everything the flavor of tofu?* When I explain that my taste buds and olfactory nerves work just fine, thank you, the foodies get *really* agitated and assume that the problem must be mental. My in-laws have come to this conclusion.

Whenever my wife's family gathers, food is the honored guest. Weeks before the actual event, e-mails begin to bounce back and forth as each person shares a lengthy list of dishes she is thinking about preparing so that the others can weigh in and help her make the decision. This triggers other suggestions and dozens of links to various recipe sites. Then the delicate negotiations begin as each person tries to steer the others in a specific culinary direction. One may write: *Julie, instead of whipping up that beef tenderloin with gorgonzola, how about making that Cajun beef brisket? We all remember that from Easter '94 and would LOVE to savor it again!* If my

ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN MIYAZAKI

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in-laws put as much time into, say, studying foreign languages as they put into their menu planning, they would each be fluent in six different tongues.

I mostly stay out of these e-mail exchanges, but I can't resist the urge to speak up now and then. I like to suggest fancy-sounding pizzas, and in lieu of a recipe place the phone number to the neighborhood Domino's. When the group seems to be gravitating toward a chicken dish for the entrée, I hop on the meal wagon and suggest KFC, reminding everyone that we can eat off of paper plates and won't have to bother with washing the dishes. Mostly, my in-laws ignore me; occasionally, they tell me—despite all the previous failed attempts—that whatever dish they're going to prepare will so delight and amaze me, that (finally!) I will become a foodie, and a die-hard one at that. Within minutes of this culinary conversion, they suggest, I will start raving about glazed ginger-soy chicken or East Indian roasted rack of lamb. Not likely.

When feeling really pressured, I jokingly tell them that I have embraced a new faith that strictly forbids the eating of anything prepared by one's kin. As irritating as they find this, it's not until we actually gather for the event that their real displeasure emerges. That's because I rarely eat their food. It's not that I have anything against them or the dishes; usually, I'm just not in the mood.

When the in-laws ask what I *am* in the mood for, they don't like my answers. Snacks are my primary food source, which means my diet mostly consists of soft pretzels, chips, and candy. (I'm a *big* fan of Sno-Caps.) When I do sit down to the table for a real meal, my favorite dishes are pancakes, ham and Swiss sandwiches, and pizza. For dessert, I mostly eat ice cream, though cookies will also do the trick.

This rubs foodies the wrong way because they want *everyone* to love their dishes and rave about them. *Oh, Natalie, I don't know what you could have possibly done with these deviled eggs, but they are out of this world! Out of this world!*

I don't have such enthusiastic responses. In fact, I'm well known for having no re-

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sponse. The family foodies take my silence personally, as if it's an indictment of their cooking and their character. They feel compelled to probe, to pull a comment out of me in much the same way that, say, someone who got their hair cut may ask a spouse who didn't notice what they think.

Here's how these culinary investigations typically unfold:

"Steve, did you try my Belgian egg rolls?" one of my sisters-in-law will ask.

"No, but they sure look great."

"Go ahead and try one; you'll love 'em. There's a hint of cinnamon in them."

"No, thanks. But, again, they sure *look* great."

"You're not even going to try one?"

"No, I'm not interested, thanks."

"C'mon, try one. Just one—it won't kill you."

"I'm sure it won't, but I'm full."

"All you ate was turkey and potatoes."

"That's all I wanted. I had three helpings."

"You're not even going to eat Uncle Matt's Szechuan green beans?"

"Nope."

"I don't get you."

"That's OK. Would you like dessert? I'm headed to the fridge for a Klondike bar."

"But what about your wife's New York-style cheesecake?"

"No, I don't think so. Ice cream sounds better to me."

"You are a freak."

WHEN IT COMES to my disinterest in food and my unconventional eating habits, it's not just family that I need to manage, it's my colleagues and clients, too. My work in advertising frequently takes me to New York. After a day of meetings or shooting a television commercial, everyone else is eager to relax over a fine meal in one of the town's countless stellar eateries. I couldn't care less. While they debate where to eat, I zone out. I can follow the conversation, really, but they might as well be speaking in Finnish.

First foodie: "The Garlicky Gnome has *outrageous* pork tenderloin. Let's go there!"

Second foodie: "Sounds yummy, but I heard Freddie Newsome's Café has a new chef and he's taken the place all fusion—Hawaiian and Eastern European."

Third foodie: "We can't be in New York and *not* eat at that new Russian place."

Once, a conversation went on so long I stepped out of the hotel and bought a soft pretzel and Coke from a street vendor and returned, only to find my colleagues still debating. Making matters worse, they had invited the concierge into the discussion, which only resulted in another 25 options being placed on the table for consideration. I told them to get me when they made up their minds; I'd be at the bar.

From my point of view, dining out with work friends becomes even more frustrating when the handing out of the menus at

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the restaurant initiates another 30-minute round-robin about what looks good, who recommends what, and which items on the menu remind anyone of anything else they have ever eaten in their lives. I do my best to redirect the conversation, usually to little avail. I'd rather talk about the wallpaper. Which makes sense, since I'm usually hungry enough to eat it.

Early in my career, I felt pressured to participate in the "Where shall we dine tonight?" debates and felt compelled to order one of the fancier dishes on the menu. I worried if I played it safe with, say, a straight-up filet or a club sandwich, that I would be perceived at best as not adventurous, and at worst, uncivilized. I mean, after all, isn't the ability to prepare and enjoy duck breasts with peaches and tarragon what separates humans from apes?

I also used to pretend that I liked golf and that I enjoyed sports. But I finally matured to the point where I could accept myself for who I am: a happy vulgarian. Besides, my colleagues and clients look to me (hopefully) for my advertising talent, not for the caliber of my palate. So now I just order what I want. Sometimes that's something fancy enough to be the cover shot on a gourmet magazine. But most of the time I choose to go heavy on the cocktails and stick to bread and pasta, or bread and steak, or bread and more bread—never a bad choice, if you ask me.

A few years back, I so enjoyed the pumpkin soup at a five-star restaurant (whose name I can't remember) that when it came time to order dessert—and, I must say, they had an impressive selection—I ordered another bowl of the pumpkin soup. The waiter assumed I was kidding. He chuckled and asked again what I wanted for dessert. I told him I wasn't joking. My colleagues, by that point used to my oddball eating habits, nodded and shrugged as if to say, *He's not kidding—and don't ask us to explain.*

When the waiter came back with our desserts, he ceremoniously placed my soup in front of me, smirking, while several other waiters and one of the chefs looked on. I have no idea how many rules of fine dining etiquette I violated, but you would have thought I was eating through my ears. One of the waiters even snapped a picture with his cell phone. I ignored them all and ate my soup—which I enjoyed as much as any cheesecake or crème brûlée I have ever had.

SO, ALL YOU foodies out there: Give us non-foodies a break! We don't begrudge you your tomatillo gazpacho or your chicken Florentine artichoke bake topped with a homemade glaze made with Nepalese cucumbers. So please don't begrudge me my simple cheese sandwich.

And finally, a note to my in-laws: Next time we get together, I'll be fasting—for religious purposes, of course.

Feeling odd or left out? Contact the author via his Web site: stevekissing.com

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Let the Good Times Roll

It ain't Las Vegas. But on Harrison Avenue out in Cheviot, some dare call it a strip.

It's happy hour on a Friday, and everyone in The Black Sheep, a nightclub-restaurant in Cheviot, looks happy, chattering away around black high-top tables. A three-piece band called Fineline, led by popular west side guitarist Tim Keller, provides some energy, playing an eclectic mix of mellow-ish covers on a stage at the far end of the L-shaped room.

Next to the stage, a door leads to a large patio, where smokers huddle for shivering puffs in the winter air. I'm here with friends, trying to instigate a pub crawl through every bar on the Cheviot entertainment strip, roughly a tenth of a mile along Harrison Avenue. My goal is to fully experience what is becoming one of Cincinnati's busiest gathering spots for a good time. A friend points out that there are more than 10 bars along that short walk, and by the end of it we will, indeed, be crawling. She has a point. There are actually 13 drinking establishments within a half-dozen blocks of where we're sitting. Still, there's no way to fully appreciate the strip without experiencing it. You're game, right? Then let's go.

Since we're already here, we'll start with The Black Sheep. The happy hour crowd is made up mostly of baby boomers, but younger folk have begun filtering into the place, and by 11 will have it to themselves. A nighttime band starts at 9 to keep things hopping. There's a good menu of bar food available—appetizers, sandwiches, and a surprisingly delicious pizza.

The Black Sheep is located on the southeastern edge of the Cheviot strip, and since opening on New Year's 2008 it has drawn patrons from throughout the city, who can either stay and dance the night away or use it as a starting point before heading further west. Which is how owner Scott Scherpenberg planned it. In fact, that's how he came up with the name. A dark-haired, 30-ish guy bristling with energy, Scherpenberg is a Cheviot native and resident. Using the west side code of naming one's home parish, he identifies where he grew up simply as, "St. Martin's."

A Cheviot fireman by day, he opened the place with partners Greg Kling and Tom Gessendorf. So, why "The Black Sheep," I ask. Scherpenberg tells me that Cheviot is named after the Cheviot Hills in southern Scotland and was settled by Scots. (This I knew, though in Scotland the word is pronounced like *Chev* in *Chevrolet*, while we west-siders say *Shiv*.)

Cheviot, Scherpenberg continues, also refers to a breed of sheep common in the Scottish hills. Because the breed is white, farmers sometimes lost them if they grazed too high in the snow-covered terrain. To make their herds easier to find, the farmers would mix in a few black ones. Thus

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"The Black Sheep," the place that will help anyone in the city find the herd of Cheviot bars.

I'm impressed by the amount of thought put into the name. Scherpenberg goes on to explain the thought he's put into his establishment. "The goal was to create a place where my mom doesn't feel too old, and I don't feel too young," he says. Given the broad range of ages around us, he seems to have succeeded. He says he's learned a lot in a short time about the never-ending battle to stay afloat in the current economy.

"It's not easy," he says. "You've got 13 places inside Cheviot and five more right outside." But rather than eliminate the competition, he hopes they will work more closely together, believing that the bars collectively draw far more people than any of them would attract by themselves. "You don't have a lot of entertainment areas in town," he says. "So we have something unique here." Eager to find out how unique, we head out the door.

WE WALK MAYBE 30 feet to the corner of North Bend Road and Harrison Avenue, turning right on Harrison. A short block later we come to Skin's Place, with Costello's right across the street. These no-frills bars cater to locals, with televisions tuned to sports, pool tables, and modest bars. You won't get a Cosmo or chocolate martini here. A bright sign announces "Skin's Place" above a navy-blue awning that also announces "Skin's Place." Costello's features a less winsome facade, going more for the battered bunker look. Both places conjure the old days, when bars ruled with far less fanfare. Long-gone establishments such as the Hob-Nob and the E&B catered mostly to blue-collar local guys seeking a cold beer and good fellowship.

After quick stops at Skin's and Costello's we take a very short stroll down Harrison to Rootie's Brickhouse, a small, square room with exposed brick walls, large windows, and a smattering of high-top tables and stools. Along with its excellent roundup of draft beers, Rootie's has a cozy, comfortable quality—a bit tonier than its neighbors but without a lick of pretension.

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Most of the tables are full and a boisterous game of darts in the far corner draws a small audience. By midnight on a weekend you can barely get inside.

But Rootie's popularity pales next to the place next door—the Cheviot Sports Tavern, a hopping hub for the early-20s crowd. One of the largest clubs on the strip, the draw here is games—darts, pool, and cornhole. If cornhole is king on the west side, the Cheviot Sports Tavern is its bejeweled throne. The thump of bags on boards provides a backbeat within the loose, rowdy atmosphere reminiscent of a backyard party.

The location has housed several restaurants through the years. In the 1960s and '70s, it was a popular eatery and drinkery called The Gay 90s. It drew many regulars, including Pete Rose, whose swanky car parked out front contrasted sharply with the humble surroundings. In *Hustle,* his book on Rose, author Michael Sokolove interviewed the owner, Danny Gumz, a boyhood friend of Pete's. Despite local rumors to the contrary, Gumz said his place was not a gambling hangout and that Rose came just to play cards, with no money involved. But other Cheviot bars, Gumz told Sokolove, provided plenty of opportunities to gamble. "In the '60s you could bet in any damn tavern in this town," he said. Sokolove describes Cheviot in that era as "hardscrabble," and while today you won't confuse it with Las Vegas, the nightlife, if a bit scrabbled, is far less hard.

TO GET TO our next stop, we must cross Harrison Avenue again, a quick scurry that is a large part of the Cheviot Entertainment Experience. Between smokers gathered at every doorway and partiers strolling from one place to the next, often scampering across Harrison in little groups, there's nearly as much action outside as in.

We slip into Fogarty's, where we meet owner Eileen Borgmann. A striking blonde, Borgmann has been in the bar business for years, though her main job is running TB Sports Awards and Custom Apparel, a silk-screening store that occupies the front part of the building.

The bar has changed names a few times recently. When Borgmann bought the

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building in 2004, the bar was called Shelton's and featured a first and second floor. Downstairs was pool, darts, and a bar. The larger upstairs room offered live bands and dancing. Then it became Rockin' Kickin' Country and then Mr. B's, which attracted a younger, more boisterous clientele, and Borgmann quickly tired of the hassles and closed it down again. A few months ago she reopened as Fogarty's, using the family name in honor of her grandmother Jane and her uncles Murray and Jack, the latter well-known to older Cincinnatians as a news reporter on WCPO radio and television.

You might wake up with a throbbing head after a night on the Cheviot strip, but your wallet will feel OK.

The top level is now only rented for parties. The bottom remains a small bar that is dark yet inviting. Borgmann plans to decorate with an Irish theme. "I want an Irish pub but not fabricated," she explains. "I don't want the clovers and Celtic knots. It will be like an Irish pub in Ireland." She's seeking a mellower, older crowd.

She says the draw for the strip is the number, diversity, and proximity of the bars. "That's what makes Cheviot neat," she says. "You have so many different options. All the bars feed off each other. They're all clean and nice, and you can just go from one to the next." She also notes that the bars provide an inexpensive alternative to downtown and the Levee. If less glamorous, they're cheaper, which could add to their growing popularity in these thrifty times. You might wake up with a throbbing head after a night out, but your wallet will feel OK.

THOUGH BORGMANN IS a gracious host and Fogarty's a charming spot, we must move on, crossing Harrison again and walking a block to the intersection with Glenmore Avenue. Turn left and you're at Keller's Cheviot Café, which is right next door to Roswell's. They might as well be the same place; the front doors are within a few steps of each other. Keller's, owned by Cheviot mayor Sam Keller, is twice as large and features two bars, louder music, and a slightly younger crowd. At one end a couple evaluates the pool table as if preparing to perform surgery, while at the other "Happy Birthday" balloons float above a roaring group in full celebration mode. Drinkers stand two-deep at both bars. Roswell's, meanwhile, is nearly as busy but seems more akin to Skin's Place and Costello's.

Right around the corner on Harrison, we come to the bar that may have sparked the change in the flavor of Cheviot's entertainment district: The Second Street Saloon. Opened in 1980 on Second Street downtown, it fell victim to the construction of Paul Brown Stadium. Owner Carol Baker changed locations but kept the name. For Cheviot, this was a step up—a new spot run with more than a desire to attract people from the neighborhood. A fancy sign and inventive promotions drew new regulars and gave the strip a more energetic attitude. Though it's essentially a shotgun bar—a long narrow room with pool and darts in the back—it attracted a broader clientele, which began spilling over into all the other bars. With that, the strip was born.

Located a few doors down Harrison, the Smokin' Monkey is open for business on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. With nary a window in the place and a single, full-metal door, it looks a bit forbidding from the outside. I had always assumed it drew a crowd of young men who like to guzzle beer, punch each other, and throw up (and the women who love them) but the reality is far different. The interior is surprisingly nice. An undulating bar graces the far wall, and the main dance area explodes with colorful pulsing lights. Urban pop blares through a first-rate sound system and owner Denise List, who works behind the bar, explains that dancing is the main attraction here, along with her many specialty drinks, particularly the 29-ounce Mega-Monkey or one-liter Long Island Iced Tea in a range of flavors from mango to "exotic." Both come with glow-stick straws that make the drinks look almost radioactive. "Most people order one of my drinks," List says proudly. "They're beautiful, and that's our biggest draw." She pours the drinks into large beer steins for men, who may feel unmanly walking around with a bowl-shaped glass of glowing fruit-flavored liquid.

The crowd ranges widely in age and is, if energetic, well behaved. In fact, the only scary thing about The Smokin' Monkey is the mural of a smoking monkey on the wall behind the bar—a questionable, even sinister-looking, fellow. Well, the monkey and the ghosts. It seems the place is haunted. Things regularly go bump in the night and in the morning those things aren't where Denise and her staff put them. At least once a month, she comes in during the day to find all the liquor bottles behind the bar turned around, the labels facing the other way. The jukebox sometimes bursts into song even when it's not plugged in. A heavy ice scoop often finds its way into a cooler behind the bar, though it's always left in the front ice bin.

"I noticed strange things happening right after I bought the bar, but I didn't tell anybody about them," List says. "I didn't want people to think I was nuts." By now she's not the only person who has noticed the unexplainable events. "It's like pulling teeth to get my staff to go into the basement," she says with a laugh. Having owned the place for 12 years, she's become accustomed to paranormal activity, though she invited a ghost-hunting group to investigate and has done research on the building.

The property was originally owned by Cheviot's founder John Craig. Two of his sons were killed by lightning and his wife drowned in a cistern. They were buried near the building in what is now a large parking lot. The upstairs, says List, may have been a brothel and a bookie joint a hundred years ago, which fits well with the nefarious history of old-time Cheviot.

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Whether someone met a violent end and is still hanging around, she doesn't know. I wish we could hang around longer—no, really— but we must keep moving.

ACROSS THE STREET stands Luckey's, an Irish-themed bar with the shamrocks and leprechauns Eileen Borgmann hopes to avoid at Fogarty's. Two wide front windows offer a warm welcome, and the band you see playing on a stage right behind them lets you know the joint is jumpin'. Luckey's offers live music four nights a week. The crowd varies from twentysomethings to older folks and seems pretty varied in background, though a sign on the door forbids the wearing of "colors," suggesting that some of those folks are bikers. But I can't say for sure, just as I have no idea why Luckey's is spelled with an "e."

Fact is, I'm too tired to find out. And I'm grateful that the next stop is our last. We head to Maury's Tiny Cove for a nightcap. A west side institution, Maury's opened in 1949 and very much retains the atmosphere of that era. With its strangely low ceiling, red leather booths, dark paneling, and even darker lighting, it looks like the set for a Rat Pack movie. In fact, as we take a seat at the bar upstairs (the one downstairs is packed), Dean Martin croons "Ain't that a Kick in the Head" through the ceiling speakers.

Despite waitresses bustling through with trays full of steak, the atmosphere here is calmer than in the other places we've visited, the crowd a bit older, more sedate, more sophisticated. In the warmer months, the bar extends onto a patio deck with umbrella'd tables, giving patrons a pleasant view of Cheviot's residential streets and the place a livelier tone. For now, the ambiance, if strikingly anachronistic, is a welcome relief from pool tables and dartboards and ecstatic rounds of Jaeger Bombs served in plastic shooter cups. Sometimes the entertainment district can be a bit too entertaining. I'm hoping to hear some Sinatra—in fact, I'm counting on it—and enjoying some relief from the frenetic world of Saturday night on the strip. Here ends the crawl. Can I say what happens in Cheviot, stays in Cheviot? Yes, I can.

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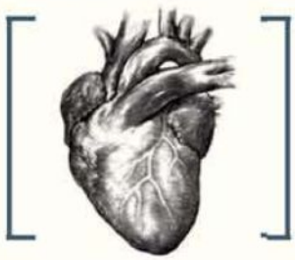

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The Night Kitchen

Oxford's B&D has fed generations of jocks, geeks, stoners, drunks, and scholars.

It's 2 a.m. and customers are lined up three and four deep along the counter at Oxford's Bagel & Deli Shop, the cramped joint on High Street just blocks from Miami University's campus. They're all clamoring for one of B&D's steamed bagel sandwiches, yelling their desires whenever one of the workers behind the counter calls out: "Anyone need to order?"

"Can I get a Wam-O and a 20/20 and a bag of chips?"

"I'll take a Messy Katie!"

"Can I get a Tonya Harding Club?"

The smoky-sweet smell of melted Gouda perfumes the air and puffs of vapor rise from the steamers, waffle iron-like appliances that the employees use to turn a regular sandwich into a warm package of gooey goodness. The six workers—Gary Franks (at left in photo), one of the owners, plus five female undergraduates—smear, scoop, and layer, while they sing along to the feel-good party mix, everything from Meat Loaf to Sir Mix-A-Lot, that blares from a set of speakers.

On the other side of the counter, the crowd is mostly students, who make B&D a regular stop on their way home from bar-hopping. Tonight they're joined by alums in town to say good-bye to The Balcony, a long-lived, well-loved local bar that's being razed for luxury student apartments. Both groups seem to have indulged heavily. At one end of the counter, a couple begins making out, the guy's hands roaming up and down the girl's strapless, thigh-high dress, much to the amusement of onlookers. At the other end, a man in a Polo dress shirt unbuttoned to mid-chest is swaying back and forth on his tasseled loafers as he holds up a coin. "You got more than a quarter?!!" a worker shouts.

Many will not remember this particular night. Nevertheless, for most the mere mention of B&D will conjure up hazy, happy memories for years to come. There's something about this hole-in-the-wall's combination of comfort food and party atmosphere—as if your grandmother were making you a grilled cheese sandwich in the midst of a frat rager—that sticks with you. It's the reason alums outfit their toddlers in B&D T-shirts, pay up to $400 at charity auctions for the naming rights to a new sandwich, and open up their own B&Ds in places like Chicago; Charlotte; Moscow, Idaho; and Indianapolis. It's also the reason Steve Palffy, a Miami grad who worked here in the 1980s, is leaning up against a wall just outside the entrance a little after 2 a.m., ingesting a chicken salad bialy to cap off a night of drinking at The Balcony. "I drove in from Detroit last night and the first thing I did when I got here was walk in and order a bagel," he says. "I love this place. I have nightmares where they've moved the shop and I can't find it."

In a world of fast food and cookie-cut-

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ter snacks, it's still possible to have an unforgettable nosh. Even if you can't quite remember it when you wake up.

THE ARCHITECT BEHIND B&D's success is Ned Stephenson (at right in photo on page 64), an aging Dead Head with a grizzled beard and a demeanor to match. The 59-year-old Oxford native discovered his calling while an undergraduate at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, where the preferred late-night snack was a steamed sub sandwich. "I'd been there about six weeks and I found that every night after the bars closed, I'd be in this deli, Sam & Andy's," he recalls. "I was getting these great sandwiches that came out of these magic steamers. I came home and said, 'Dad I don't need to do this college stuff. I know what I want to do with my life.' " But Stephenson's father advised him to stay in school, lest he end up in Vietnam. In 1975, business degree in hand, Stephenson bought out a deli in uptown Oxford. He'd planned to sell steamed subs, but he'd inherited some inventory from the previous owner that included bagels. He put them on the menu steamed Knoxville-style, like the subs. The moist, melt-y bagels were a hit; today the menu offers both kinds of sandwiches, but it's the bagels that have captured hearts and minds.

The place did have its moment of peril. In 1987, B&D was hit by a one-two punch: The stock market crashed, leaving students with less expendable cash, and Ohio raised the drinking age to 21, producing fewer late-night drunks. Things were so bad that Stephenson fired his employees and searched for a way to reinvent his business. Salvation came in the form of an MBA student, who analyzed B&D and made a simple suggestion: Name the sandwiches.

So Stephenson introduced 10 "named" bagels—classics such as the Miami Bagel (cream cheese and cinnamon on a blueberry bagel) and The Hungry Heifer (roast beef and smoked cheddar on an onion bagel, an homage to the then-hit TV show *Cheers).* Today the list has grown to nearly 100, including the Class of '98 Riot Bagel—ham, salami, smoked cheddar, onions, mustard, and black pepper on a jalapeño bagel. (Trying to parse this one? The pork products represent the police and the pepper and jalapeño the spray used to disperse a crowd that got out of hand that spring.) New combos are always possible. At least once a month, someone comes in bearing a sign for a new sandwich; Stephenson hangs the sign for a month, during which time the originator must convince friends to buy the sandwich if he or she wants the creation to become part of the permanent menu.

These days, B&D is holding its own even in a down economy. It helps that Stephenson now has a partner in Franks, a former student employee who turned pro in 1996. Stephenson works the morning hours and Franks takes the night shift. A few blocks away are chain restaurants that have become the norm in college towns—Qdoba, Chipotle, Jimmy John's—but they don't feel threatened. "Everything is so plastic in America," Stephenson says. "We're one of the few places left that has some originality."

An MBA student made a simple suggestion: Name the sandwiches.

"WHAT'S GOOD HERE?" a baby-faced student asks Jessica Fitzpatrick, a worker with pink streaks in her bangs working the far end of the counter. There are dozens of customers jostling behind this newcomer—customers who know *exactly* what they want—but Fitzpatrick shows no trace of annoyance. She smiles and suggests the Crunch and Munch, a wildly popular creation that features turkey, smoked cheddar, lettuce, honey mustard, and the signature ingredient: a three-inch mound of Nacho Doritos that get smashed down by the top half of the bagel.

Most customers are not as clueless as this girl; some can be a whole lot less polite, too. Franks once had a police complaint filed against him because he chucked a cucumber slice at someone who was jamming his hand into the tip jar. No charges were ever filed. Customers also used to steal so many bags of chips from the snack rack that Stephenson and Franks now cover it in plywood and chain it shut.

There are other annoyances: customers who squirt employees with condiment bottles; who sneak out without paying; who throw up. Still, there's money to be made even from the miscreants, says Michael Gould, a B&D worker. Drunks are easily parted with their cash, he says, so it isn't unusual to pull in $300 in tips on a Saturday night. And if an employee makes a sandwich wrong, the staff can usually auction it off for more than its market value with the profits going into the tip jar: "There's always enough drunk people in here that they'll pay $20 for a pizza bagel that I fucked up," he says.

Workers say there are perks beyond the tips: Christmas parties, a special dinner for graduating seniors, and a company ring for those who get their diploma ("I treasure that ring," says former employee and 2006 MU grad Aimee Maher. "I have no idea where my Miami ring is, but I'll never lose that one.") Employees can also indulge in pranks that would never be allowed at corporate-owned restaurants. A photo on the back wall documents when a former employee did a round of deliveries clad only in an apron. "That guy's a doctor now," Franks says, pointing to the naked rear end in the photo. "He still stops in occasionally."

Stephenson describes B&D as a co-ed fraternity, where students bond over the late-night craziness. And B&D has shaped the lives of some. Missy and Geoff Owen both worked there in the mid-1990s, fell in love, and later married (Stephenson gave them a steamer as a wedding present). After graduation, she went to law school and he took a job working for a bank. When Geoff burned out on banking in 2005, he opened Owen's B&D in Charlotte, North Carolina. Geoff says he was inspired by his relationship with Stephenson, who takes his employees out to Reds games and steak dinners and welcomes them into

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his home. "He's a great guy," says Owen, "and one of my goals here was to recreate that atmosphere for my own workers."

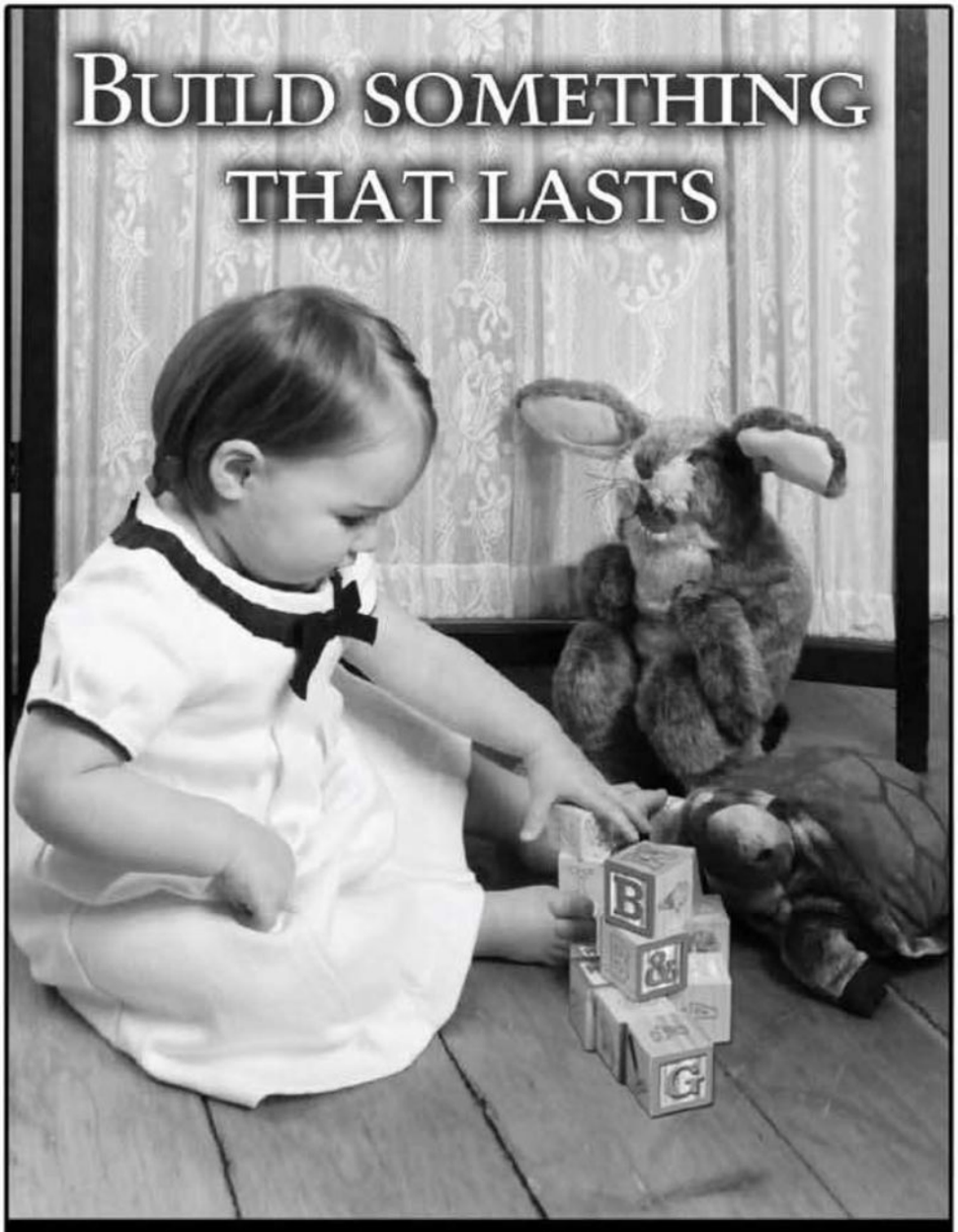
Owen's North Carolina joint is not the Oxford store's only love child. There are a handful of other B&D offspring around the country. Most asked for and received Franks's and Stephenson's official blessing. But a few have never contacted them. Which raises the question: If this place is so great, why not franchise the heck out of it?

Several years ago, the two men actually considered that. But they worried the restaurant would lose its personality. Would diners outside of a college town appreciate the gastronomic genius behind the stoner-inspired Dank 'n' Eggs (scrambled eggs, bacon, roast beef, half cheddar, half American, honey mustard, salt, and pepper on a combo bagel), or the appeal of the Afterburner (meatballs, provolone, banana peppers, and pizza sauce on an onion bagel), which comes with its own cigarette? Would they appreciate B&D's shabby-hip decor and its casual shout-and-elbow ordering procedure? Would franchising mean B&D would have to be dumbed down or—worse—spiffed up? "This place is one-of-a-kind," Franks says. "We would never want to lose that."

AT 3:15 IN the morning, Franks begins last call, yelling several times: "Anyone else need to order?" and "Allriiight, everybody ordered yet?" He dims the lights but leaves the door open. Soon it will be time to clean—the cutting boards are smeared with avocado and the floor sprinkled with a trail of iceberg—but first the girls behind the counter head outside to count the tip jars and have a smoke on High Street, now quiet and nearly deserted.

Franks is about to follow them when a guy wanders in. He holds up his hands a bit sheepishly and says, "I graduated in '02. Can I get a Mr. Turkey?"

Franks hesitates for only a second. With a shrug, he grabs a knife and bagel. "OK, what the heck," he says. "I'll make you something."



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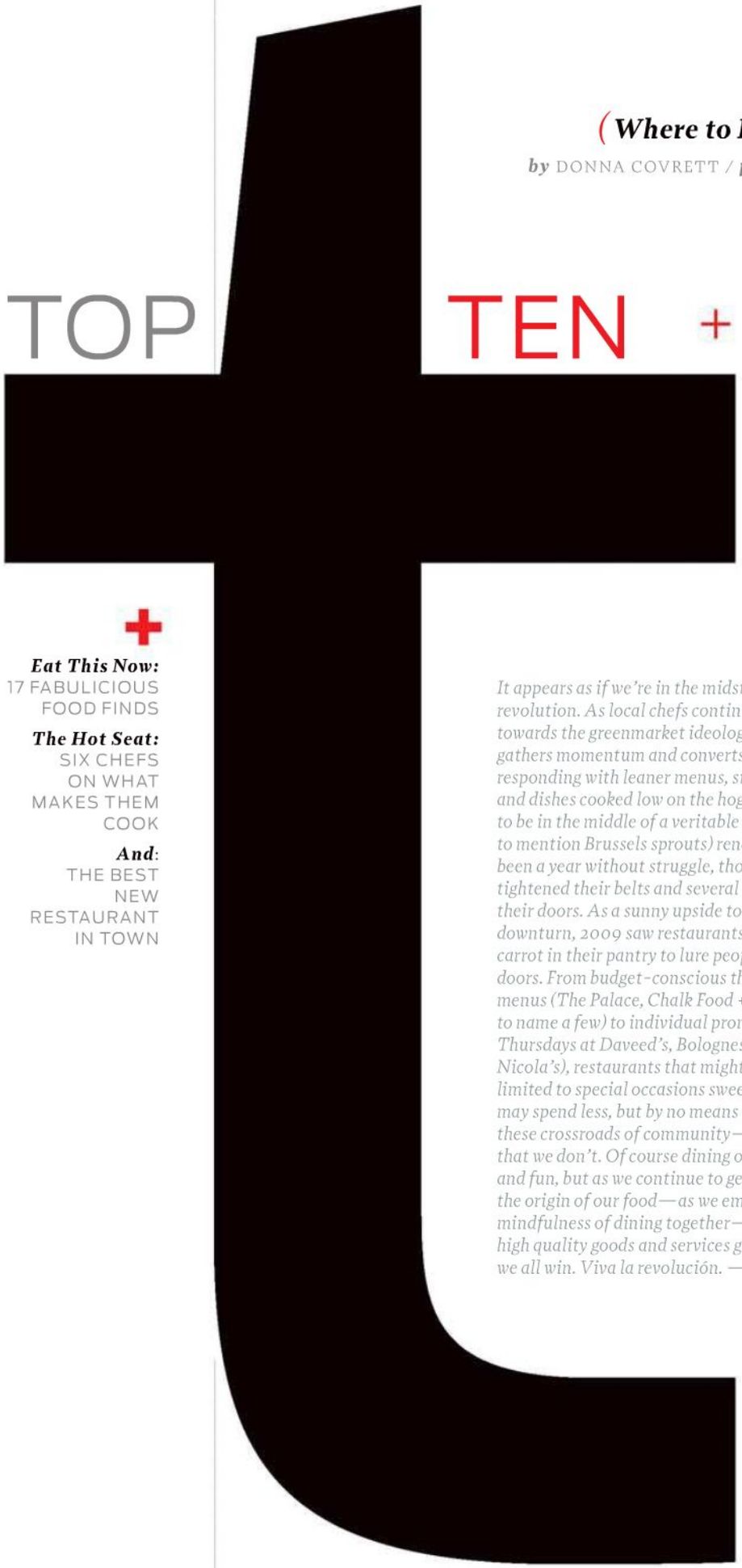
by DONNA COVRETT / *photographs by* RYAN KURTZ

TOP TEN +



DRIED AND TRUE
(MANGALITSA PORK PROSCIUTTO WITH VACCA ROSSA PARMESAN AND EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL, FROM BOCA)

+

Eat This Now:
17 FABULICIOUS FOOD FINDS

The Hot Seat:
SIX CHEFS ON WHAT MAKES THEM COOK

And:
THE BEST NEW RESTAURANT IN TOWN

It appears as if we're in the midst of a food revolution. As local chefs continue the march towards the greenmarket ideology, as farm-to-table gathers momentum and converts, restaurants are responding with leaner menus, simpler techniques, and dishes cooked low on the hog. In fact, we appear to be in the middle of a veritable bacon and egg (not to mention Brussels sprouts) renaissance. It has not been a year without struggle, though, as diners tightened their belts and several restaurants closed their doors. As a sunny upside to the economic downturn, 2009 saw restaurants dangling every carrot in their pantry to lure people through their doors. From budget-conscious three-course prix fixe menus (The Palace, Chalk Food + Wine, and Slims, to name a few) to individual promotions (Burger Thursdays at Daveed's, Bolognese Mondays at Nicola's), restaurants that might have once been limited to special occasions sweetened the pot. We may spend less, but by no means have we abandoned these crossroads of community—and it's important that we don't. Of course dining out should be lively and fun, but as we continue to get more familiar with the origin of our food—as we embrace the mindfulness of dining together—the demand for high quality goods and services grows. And in that, we all win. Viva la revolución. —D.C.

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EAT THIS NOW

DUCK FAT FRIES AT CHALK FOOD + WINE

Cast for years in the role of devoted partner to burgers, it's time to give French fries their proper due. Chef Mark Bodenstein cooks his pencil-sized frites in duck fat, a fine French tradition that lends a rich, smoky flavor and a texture that traverses from soufflé to crisp in one bite, leaving all others waddling behind. ***318 Greenup St., Covington, (859) 643-1234***

↑ YELLOWTAIL SNAPPER WITH VEAL SWEETBREADS ↗ SEARED FOIE GRAS WITH LADY APPLE TARTE TATIN ↙ CHEF TODD KELLY IN COMPLETE CONTROL AT ORCHIDS ↙ DUCK PROSCIUTTO WITH FUYU PERSIMMONS ↓ THE GLORIOUS ART DECO DINING ROOM

"the hot seat" illustrations by CHRIS PRICE / ***"eat this now" illustrations by*** HEADCASE DESIGN

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↑ JAMISON FARM LAMB RACK WITH BRUSSELS SPROUTS, PARSLEY SAUSAGE, POLENTA, AND NATURAL AND SWEET POTATO JUS

NO. 1 ORCHIDS

ELEGANT ROOM. EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE. EXQUISITE food. Right from the start, Orchids synergizes comfortable luxury with a seduction ritual. A trio of spreads for the housemade bread—roasted garlic oil, roasted red pepper, and Plugra butter edged in sea salt—is soon followed by dishes that weave through a melodic statement of color, texture, and flavor. A round block of pink Himalayan salt serves as the plate for slices of perfectly seared tuna, fanned out on a bank of rambutans (a fruit native to southeast Asia) and sliced shiitake mushrooms. A crisp pastry cone is wrapped around more sushi grade tuna, the ends capped in sesame seeds, and delicate green daikon sprouts provide the perfect counterpoint of crunch to brine, earth, and the lychee-like sweetness of the fruit.

Chef Todd Kelly's impressive menu depends on some fine ingredients. I recommend you luxuriate in his veal sweetbreads, foie gras with an apple tarte Tatin, and Maine lobster salad. But his ability to transform common ingredients into soaring notes of pure moxie makes nearly everything that comes out of the kitchen flawless. Both seasonal preparations of rib eye—one with curly spinach, oxtail, and black truffle gnocchi; the other with marrow persillade (equal amounts of minced garlic and parsley), chanterelles, and truffled mac-and-cheese—stunned us into hypnotic silence on two separate occasions. And who would have thought that a simple, silky chicken jus could so enhance the gentle flavor of red snapper, transforming it from good to extraordinary? Pastry Chef Kat Kessler provides the exclamation point to Kelly's narrative, creating visually appealing desserts that tug on your heartstrings without sacrificing flavor. A bowl of warm bittersweet chocolate sauce supports a square pillow of caramelized marshmallow, scoop of cinnamon ice cream, and crisp almond tuile spoon. It is a gift from the dessert gods.

Even this gilded splendor of a room feels comfortable. In part, that's due to a superb service staff that is attentive without fawning, knowledgeable without preening. Here in this majestic space, at a surprisingly moderate price, you can have the best dining experience in the city.

35 W. FIFTH ST., DOWNTOWN, (513) 421-9100 / **RANK LAST YEAR:** 1

★ THE HOT SEAT ★

JEREMY LIEB
Corporate Executive Chef Jeff Ruby's

Most impressive kitchen trick: I don't know if it's a trick, but my wife always said that she married me because I was a good braiser. It goes in the same realm as a technique, but I think mastering the flame, understanding fire [is important].

Favorite kitchen tool: I would have to say a kitchen spoon. I like a [big] tablespoon you would get with a side dish, because you can cook with it, you can stir with it, and you can flip over your fish or turn your meat. I always have one.

Every kitchen should have: A pepper mill. I don't like preground pepper. I think fresh pepper really does a lot for food.

Favorite cookbook: The one that's kind of dear to me is the Café Boulud cookbook [*Daniel Boulud's Cafe Boulud Cookbook: French-American Recipes for the Home Cook*] because I helped write it. In the back it mentions my name and all that. Cookbooks are part of everyone's life, but to understand what goes into to making one is a whole different story.

Favorite dish in the city: It's *yuk hwe*, the [seasonal] steak tartare at Sung Korean Bistro. It's awesome. It's steak, Korean pears, sliced raw garlic, pine nuts, sesame oil, and salt. They have a little egg on top and they'll come mix it right in front of you and toss the pears and everything together. It's spicy from the garlic, sweet from the pears, and then you have the richness from the egg and steak and the salt brings it all together. It's wonderful.

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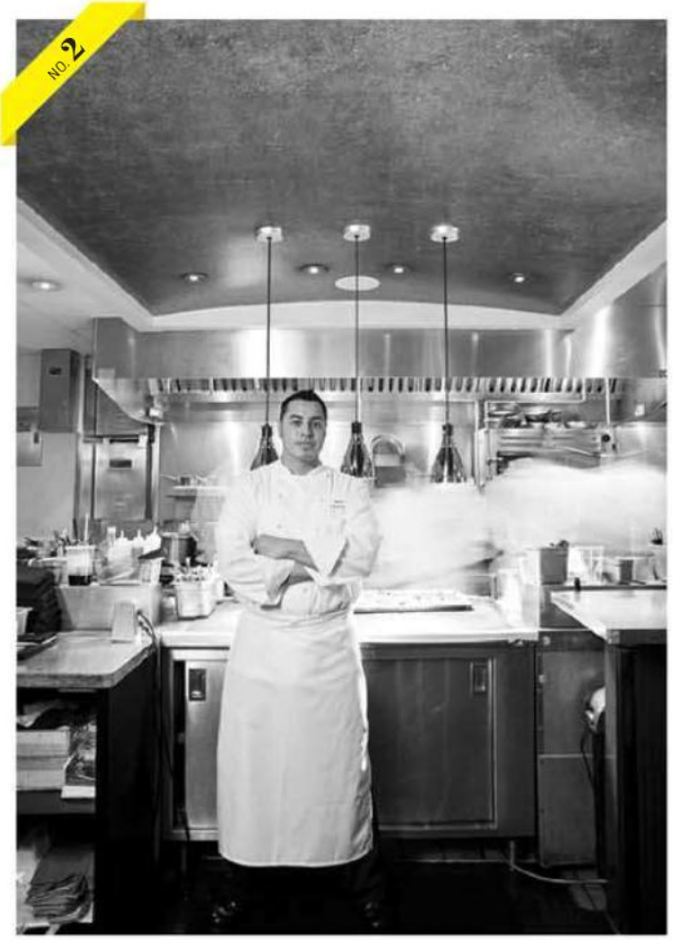
↑ POACHED SOCKEYE SALMON WRAPPED IN SCALLOP MOUSSE AND SWISS CHARD TOPPED WITH OSETRA CAVIAR

EAT THIS NOW

THE SOUPS AT VIA VITE

We wouldn't blame you if soup wasn't the first thing on your mind at Via Vite. But don't let that stop you from ordering some of the best soups in the city: yellow gazpacho with crab salad, potato leek drizzled with white truffle oil, or the elegant and sensual cioppino. ***520 Vine St., downtown, (513) 721–VITE, www.viaviterestaurant.com***

NO. 2



↓ CHEF DE CUISINE JOE GARCIA IN THE BOCA KITCHEN

NO. 2 BOCA

THOUGH CHEF/OWNER DAVID FALK COULD be a poster child for ADHD, Boca is in part the dazzling result of his restless imagination. Consistently at the top of every "best" list since its reincarnation from casual Northside bistro to fine dining dynamo in 2005, Falk keeps its engine running hot by orchestrating a fever dream of seductive food; smart, snappy service; and an atmosphere that constantly emits a hi-fi buzz. The biggest change in 2009 was the addition of Richard Brown as general manager, whom Falk hired after Pigall's closed in February. Brown's impeccable sense of service-as-an-art was demonstrated when one of my dining companion's leftovers were boxed, bagged, and sitting on the front seat of his car at the valet curb. Brown doesn't miss a thing.

The kitchen's emotional element is expressed in the constant clarity of flavor. The sweet nuttiness of cauliflower is allowed to shine in soup embellished with little more than fresh cream and croutons; the firm, delicate flesh of fresh branzino is rich and evocative of its Mediterranean origin when simply wood-fired and served with sautéed Swiss chard and grilled lemons. It's not innovative or complex food, and I say that with the utmost respect. Falk's passion is conveyed in a sense of faithfulness to the ideals of flavor—quality ingredients, simple technique—and Chef de Cuisine Joe Garcia executes them meticulously. I love to huddle with friends at one of the bar's cozy window tables, where you can linger over the salumi board of house-cured meats and a bottle of prosecco—or a glass of nebbiolo and the featherweight black truffle gnocchi sauced with a pungent, buttery taleggio fondue. It's a wonderfully intimate perch from which to witness Boca's magical ballet. As long as David Falk is in the house, expect the tempo to be brisk.

3200 MADISON RD., OAKLEY, (513) 542-2022 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 3**

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★ THE HOT SEAT ★

JEREMY LUERS
Executive Chef
The Rookwood

Ingredient obsession: Pork. The whole pig. Curing: guanciale, lomo pancetta. Making crispy pig's feet and ears; braising a rack of pork in milk; and one of my favorites—pork belly. Nothing goes to waste, you eat everything.

Favorite humble ingredient: Lemons. They enhance almost every dish, second only to salt. Braised meats go well with preserved lemons. Grilling a lemon and squeezing it over fish brings a sweeter acidity to the dish.

Most impressive kitchen trick: Does towel whipping count?

Favorite kitchen tool: My Glestain 10-inch chef knife.

Farmers' market must-have: Heirloom tomatoes in the summer: Green Zebra, Hillbilly, Black Brandywine, Bull's Heart, Early Girl, Mr. Stripey. My favorite way to eat them is between two pieces of toasted bread, heavily seasoned with salt and pepper, with good mayo.

I take out of town guests to: Terry's Turf Club [Columbia-Tusculum] or La Mexicana [Newport].

My Food Network show would be: *Family Food* instead of *Family Feud*...get it? A cross between *Man v. Food, Double Dare,* and *Family Feud*!

Are chefs born or made? Born. It's in your blood, or at least instilled at an early age. I was watching cooking shows—Justin Wilson, Frugal Gourmet, Galloping Gourmet, Julia Child—and trying to help my mother cook at 5 years old. I couldn't imagine doing something else.

NO. 3 DAVEED'S

FRIES WERE THE LAST THING I EXPECTED to be ordering at Daveed's. By fries I mean crisp, musky-sweet, truffled *pommes frites,* looking every bit like elegant pencils crowded into a silver-plated cup. And they are darn good.

Though solidly rooted in French traditions, Chef David Cook has earned a reputation for his supercharged stomp of improvisation, which has occasionally resulted in dishes that teeter on the edge of abstraction. Now 10 years old, both the food and dining room seem to have entered their more confident midlife. The walls have been warmed up with blocks of orange, taupe, and sage, and the kitchen is sending out fewer embellished plates and peppering the menu with rustic classics.

Both garganelli pasta with Italian sausage and rapini and a perfectly cooked beef filet with fingerling potatoes and peperonata are the sort of aesthetic escapes that make a good day a better one. (And if there is any food that dispenses happiness more than the superb mac-and-cheese, sign me up.) But if it's minutia you revel in, I can assure you the kitchen has not gone totally lo-fi. Bread, mustard, fruit, and pickles are the standard stuff of charcuterie; but pickled yellow beets and an anise-flecked pear mostardo accompanying a slightly salty veal terrine is more intricate. Once again it's with plump and perfectly seared foie gras that Cook pulls out the monster riffs. On one occasion it's served with a handmade graham cracker, sautéed apple, shaved truffle, raisin puree, and rioja gastrique; on another with a dollar-sized pancake, quince jam, Meyer lemon, and lavender ice cream. The food at Daveed's is always interesting, if not always glorious—but aging gracefully doesn't necessarily mean you stop taking risks.

934 HATCH ST., MT. ADAMS, (513) 721-2665 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 5**

↓ ROASTED PORK RACK CHOP WITH BRUSSELS SPROUTS, CRUSHED POTATOES, AND TOMATO AND ONION JAM

EAT THIS NOW

GINGER CIDER FROM FIVE STAR FOODIES

Put down those sodas and sugar-laden juices. Three ingredients—pressed apples, fresh ginger, and fresh lime juice—make up this refreshing beverage made by a local family-owned company. Ginger cider is just one of Five Star's healthy gourmet vegetarian products, and is just shy of a daily addiction. Thankfully, it's a guilt-free one. ***www.fivestarfoodies.com/locator.html***

CHICKEN AND ANDOUILLE ÉTOUFFÉE AT VIRGILS CAFÉ

A 20-minute roux the color of chestnuts; the Creole holy trinity of peppers, onions, and garlic; and a lot of white wine contribute to make Chef/Owner Matt Buschle's deconstructed chicken and andouille étouffée nothing less than a plate of wicked voodoo soul food. I guar-ron-tee. ***710 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, (859) 491-3287, www.virgilscafe.com***

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↑ CHEF JOEL MOLLOY IN THE DINING ROOM AT NICOLA'S

↙ WHITE CHOCOLATE MOUSSE WITH MANDARIN SORBET AND TARRAGON FOAM AT THE PALACE

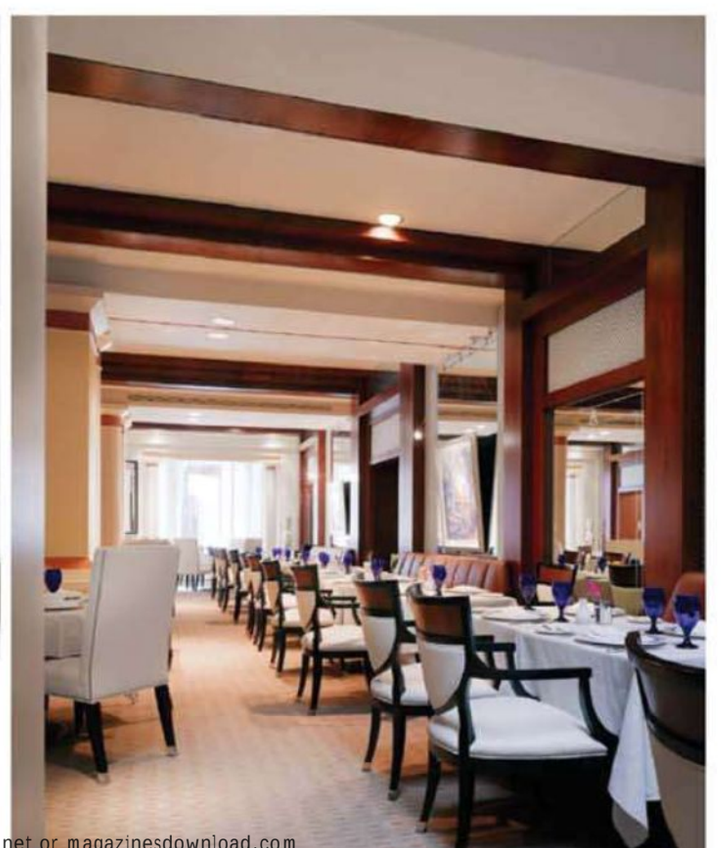
↗ TAGLIOLINI WITH FRESH MAINE LOBSTER AND BROWN BUTTER–SAUTEED CAULIFLOWER AT NICOLA'S

↓ THE WALL OF BANQUETTES IN THE NEWLY SPRUCED-UP DINING ROOM AT THE PALACE

EAT THIS NOW

TURDUCKEN SAUSAGE FROM KROEGER & SONS MEATS

Instead of turkey stuffed with a duck stuffed with a chicken stuffed with andouille sausage dressing, owner Matthew Gannaway stuffs peppery, sage-y sausage with turkey, chicken, and duck. Lightly grilled, notes of fatty poultry flavor prevail; in gumbo, it sings. ***110 Findlay Market House, (513) 651-5543***



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NO. 4 NICOLA'S

PASSION—WHETHER HIGH-SPIRITED OR subtle, and always unapologetic—is as fundamental to the Italian way of being as breathing. Nicola and Cristian Pietoso's passion has been to make food with quality ingredients, divine simplicity, and perfect preparation. This is food you can eat today and want again tomorrow.

Under Chef de Cuisine Joel Molloy, Nicola's handmade pastas are rich and evocative, a still-life of Italy's best and a reminder that the essence of great Italian cuisine is the presence of the past. Gossamer risotto with seasonal wild mushrooms and nearly libidinous ricotta and goat cheese raviolis will infuse your daydreams. You will want every bit of the maccheroni with duck ragout and herbed zucchini sauce, even if that means swiping your fingers—or a round of housemade bread—around the plate to get it all. While modern-ish, the mastery and authenticity of such dishes as pan seared skate wing with a white bean puree, Brussels sprouts, and lemon caper browned butter, or braised short ribs with root vegetables and creamy polenta, makes their restraint seem profound. And then there are just moments of pristine beauty: a salad of arugula, prosciutto, and Parmigiano Reggiano dressed in a light citronette; traditional panna cotta with fresh strawberries and 30-year-old balsamic vinegar. Like most of the dishes that come out of Nicola's kitchen, these reveal the harmony of contradictory modes—earthy sensuality and haunting etherealness—that creates such a lasting impression.

Like the room itself, service is warm, gracious, and comfortable but can occasionally lapse in knowledge and execution, most notably with wines. But the Pietosos' sheer dedication and passion for the lusty flavors of their homeland keeps drawing us back.

1420 SYCAMORE ST., OVER-THE-RHINE, (513) 721-6200 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 2**

★ THE HOT SEAT ★

JOANNE DRILLING
Executive Chef
Murphin Ridge Inn

Signature dish: People who have worked for me would say a bitter green salad. I'm fascinated with balance. The typical American diet uses so many rich things—like proteins, creamy things, cheeses, etc. I want things to brighten up, so I use a lot of lemon, arugula, watercress, and the like to balance the other out.

Favorite dish in the city: I am obsessed with the bun salad at Cilantro Vietnamese Bistro in Clifton. I usually get it with shrimp or tofu and vegetables. Their cold rolls are really good, too, but the bun salad is *it* for me. I probably go there every week and a half and get it. It's one of those super-balanced dishes. It has a variety of textures, of flavors—it's so right there, so comforting, and just enough food for me. And so inexpensive, too.

My fantasy restaurant: Primarily vegetarian; maybe a little seafood, a little bison, but more vegetarian than meat-centered. And more of my own growing. I love the idea of having an old building and putting a greenhouse on top of it.

Local chef who doesn't get enough ink: Lisa Kagen from Melt. She offers something different, something unique, and is putting out good quality food that's really affordable. That's something that's really underdone in this city.

Fast food joint you could catch me in: Every once in a while I'll get soft tacos from Chipotle. We get carry out from Blue Jay here in Northside.

The next big foodie trend: I'm seeing a lot more home brewing.

NO. 5 THE PALACE

IT'S GOOD TO HAVE THE PALACE BACK IN THE ACTION. Posh hotel dining was hit hard as the economic turn forced immoderate travel expenditures down. The Palace slogged along—rotating through chefs every couple of years—generally stymied by high price points and a ponderous semi-formality. This past year saw some significant changes that released the 27-year-old restaurant from the shackles of special occasion-ness—none more so than a $44 three-course prix fixe dinner that rippled through fooderati blogs and Facebook.

With Executive Chef Jose Salazar at the helm applying his gifts (he learned his craft through the Thomas Keller school of less-is-more), the menu has been invigorated with plenty of approachable dishes that are at once rustic and elegant. Farm greens abound—with goat cheese, roasted beets, and the sweet-tart pop of rosy red poached quince; with orange confit, shaved fennel, and Pecorino Romano—as do simply luxurious soups like the earthy, sensual mushroom. There's plenty of steak love: I've had filet, hangar, and a top-notch sirloin, but it was unbridled lust for the sirloin's side of roasted bone marrow that unraveled me. It's understated and sensational. Every day is a beautiful day in Pastry Chef Summer Genetti's dessert divahood, with a roster of sweets that range from adorable (malted chocolate three ways) to classic (pistachio financier) to inspiring (pineapple buttermilk sherbet and chorizo confit with chocolate flourless). That's right, *chorizo*. The dining room has been updated with creamy, luxurious ivories that draw the eye toward the warm woods, brilliant Frederic Bonin Pissarro paintings, and mostly, the excellent food.

601 VINE ST., DOWNTOWN, (513) 381-3000 / **NOT RANKED SINCE 2007**

↓ CHEF SALAZAR'S BRANZINO WITH SAFFRON-POACHED BABY TURNIPS, BRAISED LEEKS, MARCONA ALMONDS, BLACK OLIVE PETALS, AND SAUCE ROMESCO

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★ THE HOT SEAT ★

TODD HUDSON

Owner / Chef, Wildflower Café and Coffeehouse

Guilty pleasure: Beer. I really like super strong stouts. There's a beer called Arcadia London Porter—it's got a picture of Winston Churchill on it—that is phenomenal. And Bell's HopSlam Ale.

Ingredient obsession: Winter squashes. I just got a blue squash. It's probably a 10-pound squash, from Gravel Knolls Farm. [Owner Linda Rosselot] is the queen of funky squashes and pumpkins. They are all heritage, heirloom, or endangered species. We made a bisque out of Seminole pumpkin. It was the best soup I've ever made.

Favorite humble ingredient: Local honey, or honeycomb. We use Chris's Honey from Ray Alley's Farm in Lebanon. It's the most simple food product that's found in nature. It's clear evidence of all the beautiful things that we've got on this planet. Nothing would basically exist if it weren't for bees. To make a glaze, just put some honey in a pot and put whatever else in it and slap it on a piece of salmon or pork loin.

Favorite kitchen tool: A glass of wine.

Local chef who doesn't get enough ink: Ben Toney. He was the chef at Encore when Sturkey was there, and then he went to Trio and was sous chef. Now he is a chef at Café Bella. His ribs are pretty stellar. He makes a barbecue sauce that's 98 percent Coke that he just reduces down.

Which fast food joint could we catch you in: Jolly's Drive-in in Hamilton. The only thing I've ever gotten there in my entire life is a foot long with chili and cheese and a bag of fries.

↑ MAPLE LEAF FARM DUCK LEG CONFIT WITH LOCAL BUTTERNUT SQUASH CHUTNEY AT NECTAR

↗ COLD WATER LOBSTER RAVIOLI WITH HEARTS OF PALM, BACON, AND CHILI OIL AT CUMIN

→ SLEEK LIGHTS PLAY THE NAME GAME IN CUMIN'S DINING ROOM

NO. 6 NECTAR

THE MENU MAY BE SMALL, THE ROOM MINIMALLY adorned, but there's nothing lean about the dining experience at Nectar. Whether it's the earthiness of smoked chanterelle mushrooms centered in a bowl of corn chowder, a trio of shrimp fritters lined up atop a ribbon of tomatillo chutney, or a low-and-slow beef brisket piled on creamy polenta and brick red chile sauce, Chef Julie Francis continues to create dishes that inspire food lust in even the most unflappable diner. And these are just a few of the starters.

Years before it became mainstream, Francis committed her menus to seasonal ingredients. In autumn, that means a deceptively simple salad dressed with sherry orange vinaigrette is elevated from merely good to exquisite because the greens are just-picked, and the local honey crisp apples freckled with toasted walnuts and currants are fully ripe. It means the depth of flavor in braised lamb shoulder from nearby Turner Farm enhances the humble Israeli couscous beneath. Not only are the dishes delectable, but the presentations vibrate with color, shape, and texture. On a white rectangular plate, a queue of foods—two Ping-Pong–ball sized brown falafels lightly draped in white garlic yogurt, a branch of bright red cherry tomatoes, deep fuchsia pickled beets, dark green olives, shreds of pale pink onions, diaphanous slices of pickled cucumber, a scoop of chipotle hummus, and delicate microgreens—had everyone at our table reaching for their camera phones.

Twice monthly, the popular Nectar dinner club features a local farmer or artisan on-site, their specialty presented in five courses. Francis is an astute chef, but it's this genuine curiosity that consistently brings innovation to Nectar. It may be a simple space, but it's stocked with food that feeds the soul.

1000 DELTA AVE., MT. LOOKOUT, (513) 929-0525 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 6**

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↑ ROASTED DUCK BREAST WITH WILD MUSHROOM FLAN AND RAW AND ROASTED APPLE SALAD AT CUMIN

KIMCHI, SPICY DILL KRAUT, AND KOMBUCHA FROM FABULOUS FERMENTS

Fermented foods are purported to be probiotic superheroes, fighting disease, easing digestion, and promoting ideal health and longevity. That and a whole lot of peace, love, and cabbage are the energy behind some of the two-dozen products from Fabulous Ferments. We're particularly fond of the Groovy Grape Kombucha and the hot Korean-style kraut known as kimchi. Good bacteria never tasted so fabulous. ***www.fabulousferments.com***

SHRIMP & GRITS AT TUCKER'S

Trying to choose our favorite dish at Tucker's is as difficult as choosing our favorite song. Hash browns? Brioche French toast? But set a bowl of owner Joe Tucker's fresh, buttery seasoned grits topped with Tasso ham sauce and spicy shrimp in front of us and we feel nothing less than gratitude. Served Saturday and Sunday only. ***1637 Vine St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 721-7123***

BAGELS FROM SHADEAU BREADS

Though it's become an American icon, a good bagel west of Gotham is still difficult to find. Available only on Fridays, Shadeau's bagels are the dense and chewy breed reminiscent of the kind once made in NYC's Lower East Side bagel shops (before boutiques and bars replaced most of them). No airy confection these, with taut smooth skin, even crust-to-chew ratio, and a form just misshapen enough to remind you they're handmade. ***1336 Main St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 665-9270***

NO. 7 CUMIN

THIS WAS A SIGNIFICANT YEAR OF CHANGE for Cumin. In December the original owner and chef, Yajan Upadhyaya, sold his share to partner Alex Mchaikhi, and Owen Maass took the helm. The restaurant's tagline has been modified from "Indian Fusion" to "Eclectic," moving even further away from its Indian roots. (Before "Fusion" it had burst on the scene in 2003 as a "Modern Indian Café.") While the essence of the original still pulses throughout the menu, it's getting faint. You can still get your naan on; and getting jacked up on those addictive yogurt-marinated mushrooms with tamarind and mint sauces is still a possibility (please don't make those go away). Garam Masala makes an appearance in a decent yellow lentil ragout, and roasted cumin seed, Madras curry, cardamom, and other Indian ingredients freckle the menu.

But Maass, a talented and capable chef, has introduced dishes that were likely inspired by some of the stellar restaurants he has worked in, including Aquavit in New York; Tru and Green Dolphin Street in Chicago; and Sturkey's here. Along with Cumin's signature braised lamb shank with minted peas, you'll now find a sea salt–rubbed rib eye with a poached egg and hand-cut rosemary fries; a homey roasted pork shoulder served with a crazy-good cauliflower and Brussels sprout gratin; and duck confit paired with roasted squash and goat cheese in an arugula salad. Cumin has been struggling for years to bridge the gap between diners who embrace their border-pushing flavors and those who need familiar comforts. The new tagline and Maass's menu seem like steps toward gaining a wider audience. Combined with the sleek, stylish interior of backlit walls and attentive service, we're predicting Cumin will make that connection with diners.

3520 ERIE AVE., HYDE PARK, (513) 871-8714 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 7**

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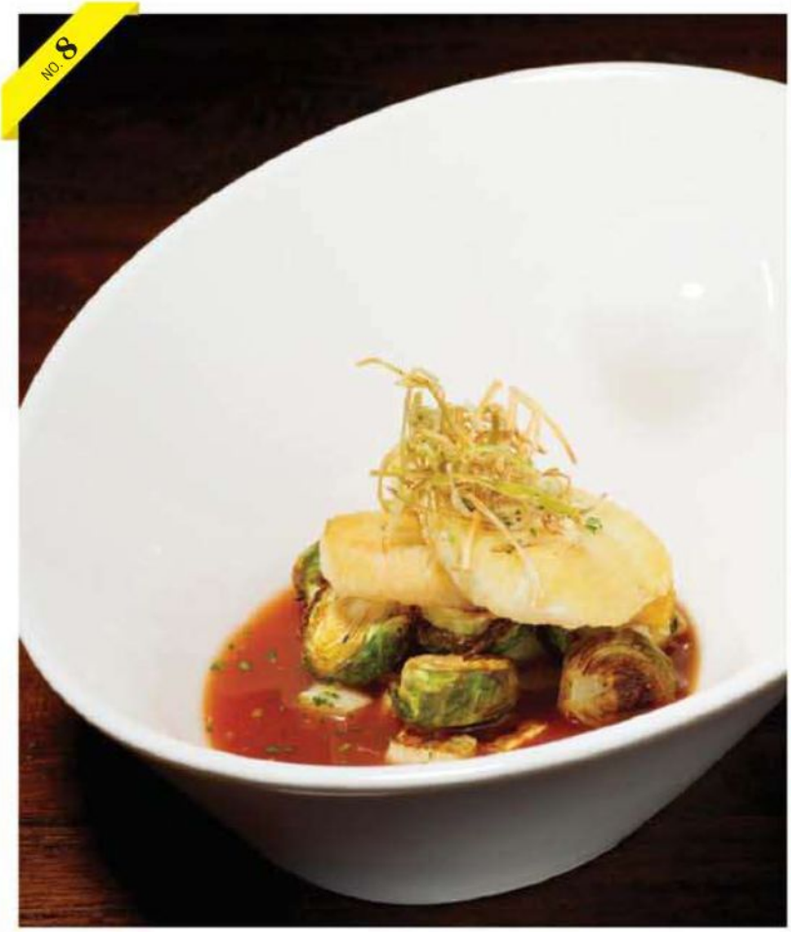

↑ BLACK BACK FLOUNDER WITH BRUSSELS SPROUTS, TURNIPS, AND TOMATO BROTH

↑ SWEETBREADS WITH CREAMED CORN, GOAT CHEESE, BACON, AND ARUGULA

NO. 8 HUGO

LIKE ITS NAMESAKE STORM, HUGO'S BLUESY SQUALL OF SOUTHERN-fried hospitality and gorgeous swirl of Low Country flavor has been a presence to be reckoned with since 2007. With his passion formed in Charleston, South Carolina, Chef Sean Daly synthesizes humble ingredients with homestyle tradition and skilled refinement to deliver a menu that's more tradition than cutting edge, more downtown than uptown. I'm a junkie for any preparation of his marshmallow-tender short ribs (the sunny side up egg and tomato confit pairing is enough to send me to confession), and have almost a kamikaze dedication to his grits, whether enriched with white cheddar and served under grilled shrimp or layered with house-made chorizo, roasted tomato, baked egg, and crispy potatoes.

Don't for a minute buy into the myth that "Southern-inspired" means everything is bathed in hog fat. Daly is a porkthropologist, but he tames his beast by underscoring a dish rather than masking it: bacon plays against the sweet brine of scallops; Tasso serves as a smoky accent to the vinaigrette that dresses a salad of frisée, blue cheese, julienned apples, and dried cranberries. It is doctor-recommended, mother-approved stuff. Service is polished, gracious, and friendly without being overly familiar. And one of the best ways to experience Hugo's hip homespun appeal is at the bar, tucked into a tufted leather chair, a single-barrel bourbon on ice in hand, and selections from the small plate menu laid in front of you. Whatever kind of storm may be brewing outside, Hugo knows instinctively that the best way to weather it is for all y'all to come on in.

3235 MADISON RD., OAKLEY, (513) 321-4846 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 9**

AFFOGATO AT DOJO GELATO

Italians call it affogato al café *("drowned in coffee"), a milkshake of sorts, created by dumping a a shot of espresso over a scoop of gelato. Hot espresso and cold gelato may not seem like natural partners, but the roasted bitterness of the espresso pairs nicely with the creamy sweetness of the gelato. You can try any combination, but few are better than espresso and vanilla or espresso and chocolate.* ***1801 Race St., Findlay Market, (513) 328-9000, www.dojogelato.com***

CATHEAD BISCUITS AT GREEN DOG CAFÉ

Warm out of the oven, ready to be sliced and spread with a mound of sweet butter and strawberry jam—is there anything better than a fresh buttermilk biscuit? A southern tradition, a truly sublime cathead biscuit (so named because they're as big as a cat's head) is hard to come by. Not so at Green Dog. Chef Mary Swortwood bakes two-fisted biscuits as fluffy as a Persian. Only these melt in your mouth. ***3543 Columbia Parkway, Columbia-Tusculum, (513) 321-8777, www.greendogcafe.net***

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★ THE HOT SEAT ★

MARK BODENSTEIN

Executive Chef
Chalk Food + Wine

Favorite artisanal ingredient: Caviar. It's underutilized, underappreciated, and misunderstood. Its flavor adds an element of surprise to a dish. I buy from Tsar Nicoulai Caviar in California [www.tsarnicoulai.com]. The Royal Onyx is divine, and I love their beet and truffle infused roes.

Farmers' market must-have: Pawpaws. I love the texture and overall flavor: not quite banana and not quite anything else. The sweet bitterness pairs well with most mushrooms and fall vegetables. Carriage House Farm and Shady Grove Farm have the best.

Pantry essential: Salt. Sel Gris for minerals, Murray River for its sweet floral flavor, Hawaiian Blue for its licorice bite. I like to pair them with chocolates and olive oil or to finish meats and raw items. I purchase them all at Herbs & Spice and Everything Nice in Findlay Market.

Local chef who doesn't get enough ink: Stephen Williams from Bouquet Restaurant and Wine Bar [Covington]. He's utilizing the local market as much as anyone. He makes humble, simple dishes that are always fresh.

My inspiration: Kathy Cary of Lilly's [Louisville]. Charlie Trotter [Chicago]. David Falk of Boca. My grandma—nothing beats the hands of my grandma. My son Noah. I look to the future of food and dream of a world where he reaches for something—anything—and it's not full of poison, but of nutrients.

My Food Network show would be: *Market Driven.* I'd visit markets all over the world and cook with their local ingredients.

NO. 9 SLIMS

HANDMADE COMMUNAL TABLES, CHECK. GALLERY OF LOCAL ART, check. Open kitchen; laid-back, tattooed servers; hand-written menu; and a front window filled with flats of hydroponic peppercress—naturally. It's Northside: sexy, bohemian, wicked-cool Northside. Slims wouldn't fly in Kenwood or Mason. It requires a dynamic community that understands that eating is no less than an agricultural action, and that—to paraphrase agrarian Wendell Berry—to eat consciously is to live free.

Owner Patrick McCafferty has made it very clear since the restaurant's 2003 debut that Slims is a vehicle for a set of ideas that uphold the mission of the slow food movement. Community figures prominently, from the golden glow of the large picture window to the joyous cacophony of diners spooning up cumin-scented cauliflower soup or forking leaves of slightly bitter house-grown greens wedded with slices of persimmons, roasted pearl onions, and toasted hazelnut vinaigrette. Chef/locavore Joanne Drilling (yes, that's how she rolls) took over the kitchen in November 2008, lending a much needed face-lift to the menu, replacing some of the Caribbean standards with her signature flair: a charcuterie board with sublime chicken liver pâté, house-made pickles, and a compote of dried apricots and cherries; a silky chestnut flan partnered with sweet honey crisp apple; and main courses that featured buffalo, rabbit, and game. Whether dusting the edge of the plate with ground spices, or judiciously using gorgeous black kale and bright edible nasturtiums, both grown in McCafferty's greenhouses, the food was noticeably prettier. (Bummer alert: In late January, Drilling announced she was leaving Slims to become executive chef at Murphin Ridge Inn.) The service is notorious for its occasionally painfully slow pace, but the breads are homemade, the pork belly could convert a card-carrying PETA member, and the atmosphere is always celebratory.

4046 HAMILTON AVE., NORTHSIDE, (513) 681-6500 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 8**

EAT THIS NOW

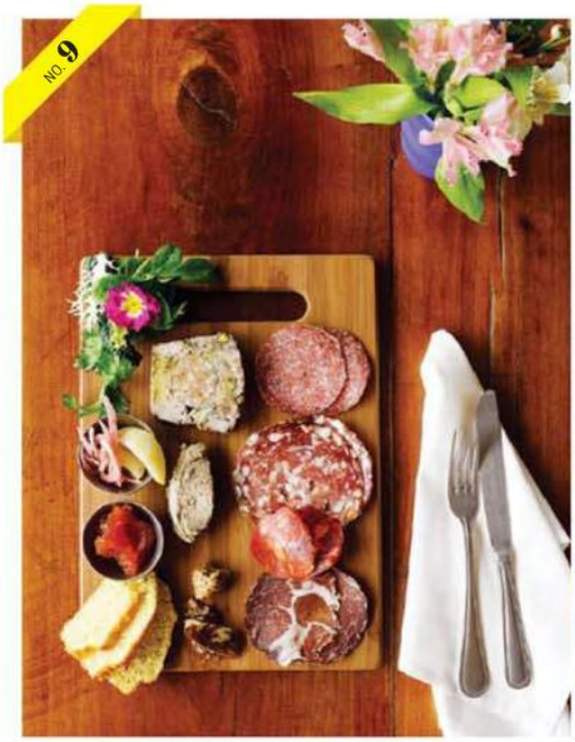
GRILLED CHEESE DONUT FROM TOM + CHEE

Trew Quackenbush and Corey Ward, owners of this seasonal Fountain Square booth, scored with one of the most inventive sandwiches of the year, built on the holy stoner trinity of salt, fat, and sugar: a sliced glazed donut layered with the sharp contrast of cheddar, then grilled (glazed side in). Here's hoping Tom + Chee finds a permanent home soon. ***www.facebook.com/4TomAndChee***

BLACK SESAME ICE CREAM AT BELUGA

Sweet and nutty, with a snap of toast and pepper, Chef Paendin Yongkanaysin's remarkable handmade black sesame ice cream will start a fight at the table. If it were any more addictive, it would be an automatic misdemeanor. ***3520 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 533-4444, www.belugaone.com***

↓ OHIO MAIDEN CHARCUTERIE BOARD WITH PICKLES AND FRUIT



↓ THE COMMUNAL TABLES AT SLIMS PUT DINERS FRONT AND CENTER

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NO.10 RIVERSIDE KOREAN RESTAURANT

COME FOR THE *JO GI MAE UN TANG*—A BOWL OF sizzling, happy hellbroth pungent with red pepper, garlic, and ginger, crowded with nuggets of fish, tofu, and vegetables. Come for the restorative power of *sam gae tang,* a chicken soup for the Seoul—a whole Cornish hen submerged in its own juices and plumped with sticky rice and ginseng, dried red dates, and pine nuts. Revered for their medicinal properties, both dinner-sized soups will leave your eyes glistening and your brow beaded with sweat. They're a detox for your overindulgence, rejuvenation for when you're feeling under the weather. If you're adventurous, come for *yuk hwe,* Korean beef tartare. Topped with a raw egg yolk and garnished with the snap of raw Asian pear, the thinly sliced strands of icy cold raw flank, deftly seasoned with chili, soy, and sesame, have a fleeting, subtle piquancy that lingers on the tongue.

Expect crowds on weekends. Expect too, that dozens of them have come for the mung bean pancake known as *bin dae duk,* a crisp veneer yielding to a polenta-like middle; and even more for *dolsot bi bim bab,* the hot stone pots filled with layers of rice, vegetables, meat or tofu, egg, and chili paste. Characterized by its electric color and addictive flavors, Riverside Korean's version is a captivating bowl of heaven. And since you've come this far, you might as well enjoy a shot or three of *soju,* the rice whiskey Koreans seem to be able to drink in copious amounts. I've grown fond of it myself, if not for cooling the heat, then for bracing myself for a karaoke performance of "These Boots Were Made for Walking" in the *noraebang* room. So, are you ready boots? Start walkin'.

512 MADISON AVE., COVINGTON, (859) 291-1484 / **RANK LAST YEAR: 10**

↑ MUL NAENG MYUN—BUCKWHEAT NOODLES IN COLD BEEF BROTH WITH BEEF, PINE NUTS, AND KOREAN PEAR

EAT THIS NOW

CHOCOLATES LATOUR

*Pastry chef, yoga teacher, cookbook author (*The Icing on the Cake*), and former circus performer Shalini Latour added chocolatier to her résumé in 2009. Made with fair trade chocolate and local ingredients (including her own herbs and cherries), the wickedly divine treats come in a variety of interesting flavor combinations. My favorites: ancho chili, lime thyme, chai spice, and little Buddha.* ***(513) 591-0085, www.chocolatslatour.com***

TAKE THE CAKE

Sure, they've got giant cupcakes, saucer-sized cookies, and homestyle cake wedges bigger than a grandmother's heart. But since moving into larger quarters in 2009, Take the Cake has become one of the hottest lunch and Sunday brunch spots in town. Dreamy quiches, sandwiches, homemade soups, and healthy salads are featured chalkboard style in the cheerful semi-industrial room. Share a communal table, linger with free WiFi, or watch the bakery action from the counter. ***4035 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 241-2772***

SMOKY SPICY TOMATO SOUP AT HONEY

Good tomato soups are plentiful, great tomato soups insufficient, and killer tomato soups scarce. Unless you dine at Honey, where Chef Shoshannah Hafner serves a lusciously smooth version that delivers a balanced trifecta of heat, sweet, and smoke. And like any good killer, it never misses. ***4034 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 541-4300, www.honeynorthside.com***

SNOWVILLE CREAMERY PRODUCTS

We can't think of any other single product that took the local community by storm more than the exceptional dairy products from this small Pomeroy, Ohio, dairy farm. Luxurious cream that nearly whips itself and bright full-bodied whole milk are the outcome of a mixed herd of grass-fed, pasture-raised cows and a dairyman nearly evangelical about producing food that benefits the land, the animals, and the people. ***www.snowvillecreamery.com***

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↑ (TOP LEFT) CHICKEN LIVER MOUSSE, LOCAL TERRINE, AGED MOUNTAIN HAM, AND SMOKED CHICKEN BREAST

↖ (BOTTOM LEFT) SEA SCALLOPS WITH POTATO PUREE, BACON CHIPS, AND SPINACH REDUCTION

↑ THE MOODY INTERIOR OF THE BAR AT TONIC, ATTACHED TO LOCAL 127

TACOS AT LA MEXICANA

La Mexicana's 10 different tacos are a cure for taco hell: the glory of pork bathed in its own juice for carnitas; *the crimson beauty of* barbacoa *seasoned with guajillo and ancho sauces; or the creamy elegance of* huitlacoche, *the fungus known as the Mexican truffle.* ***642 Monmouth St., Newport, (859) 261-6112***

BEST NEW RUNNER-UP: VIRGIL'S CAFE

Soups at this intimate neighborhood bistro are hearty, salads refreshing, entrées soulful, and desserts curvaceous. And Chef/Owner Matt Buschle makes some of the best pastrami around. ***710 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, (859) 491-3287***

LOCAL 127

INITIALLY, I WAS UNCERTAIN. LAST FEBRUARY, JEAN-ROBERT DE CAVEL resigned from his partnership with Martin Wade, who announced that Jean-Robert at Pigall's would receive an extreme makeover. Camps were formed, bloggers were inflamed. Could Wade go it alone? In September, Local 127—"A New American Eatery"—opened. The verdict? It's good. Really good.

As pledged, Wade tempered the fine dining vibe. Unadorned wooden tables have replaced the white linen, prices have dropped, and as the name suggests, nearly two dozen local vendors, farmers, and artisans contribute to Chef Steven Geddes's haute grandmother cuisine. Geddes—both a chef and master sommelier—arrived in Cincinnati from Las Vegas, where he built an impressive résumé with such culinary stars as Charlie Palmer, Charlie Trotter, and Rick Moonen. Order the chef's sampler to fully appreciate several of his house-cured treats: smoked golden trout blended with waxed beans; pears with salted duck breast or smoked chicken; a pork belly confit I could have eaten with a spoon. Though Local 127 occasionally oversells the farm-to-table concept (you're hardly a pioneer), the enthusiastic staff ply diners with elegantly rendered Sunday suppers. When is the last time you ate breaded and fried pork cutlet in a room with a chandelier? But there it is, crowned with shreds of fried shallots, sandwiched between cheesy grits and charred green cabbage. I was also smitten with the double chicken whammy of a succulent fried breast over confit, and experienced nothing less than punch drunk love for cured pork over a hill of white beans and sautéed greens. While the de Cavel–Wade dispute still has to play out, there's room for everyone at the table. Welcome Local 127.

127 W. FOURTH ST., DOWNTOWN, (513) 721-1345

★ THE HOT SEAT ★

SUMMER GENETTI

Executive Pastry Chef The Palace

Signature dish: In a man-on-the-street poll, I'm synonymous with cupcakes.

Favorite cheap eat: Melt Eclectic Deli in Northside. I always get the seitan barbecue chicken sandwich. As a vegetarian you are often stuck with a giant piece of fungus on a bun—or pasta Primavera—and it's nice to get something savory and tasty.

Ingredient obsession: Vanilla. I hate the fact that vanilla is a synonym for boring, because it's such a complex and fragrant ingredient, and it takes a whole lot of finesse to really make it shine.

Favorite kitchen tool: Our offset spatulas are our chef's knives. We cut with the offsets, we stir, we eat with the offsets when we are too lazy to go down to the cafeteria and get a spoon. We do everything with them and we are helpless if we can't find them; we lose our shit if we can't find them.

Pantry essential: Salt, because contrary to what most people think, it's a natural flavor enhancer. Every ice cream has a tiny bit. We put salt in our caramel sauce. Most people never think to season their pastry.

Favorite cookbook: *The Flavor Bible* [by Karen Page & Andrew Dornenburg]. It's like a Choose Your Own Adventure book for flavors. Like, "What goes with lichee? Oh, *this* goes with lichee!"

My fantasy restaurant: Greg and I have always said that our utopia retirement would be a bed and breakfast where we would keep bees. That's my secret retirement passion: I want to be a beekeeper.

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BUBBA KNOWS BEST

Talent and sex appeal. Training and experience. Confidence, commitment, and luck. For 23 years, CCM's Aubrey Berg—"Bubba" to his friends and students—has been schooling Broadway hopefuls in the 10 steps to musical theater success. Here's the one that goes without saying: Study with Aubrey Berg.

By
Polk Laffoon IV

Photographs by
Jonathan Willis

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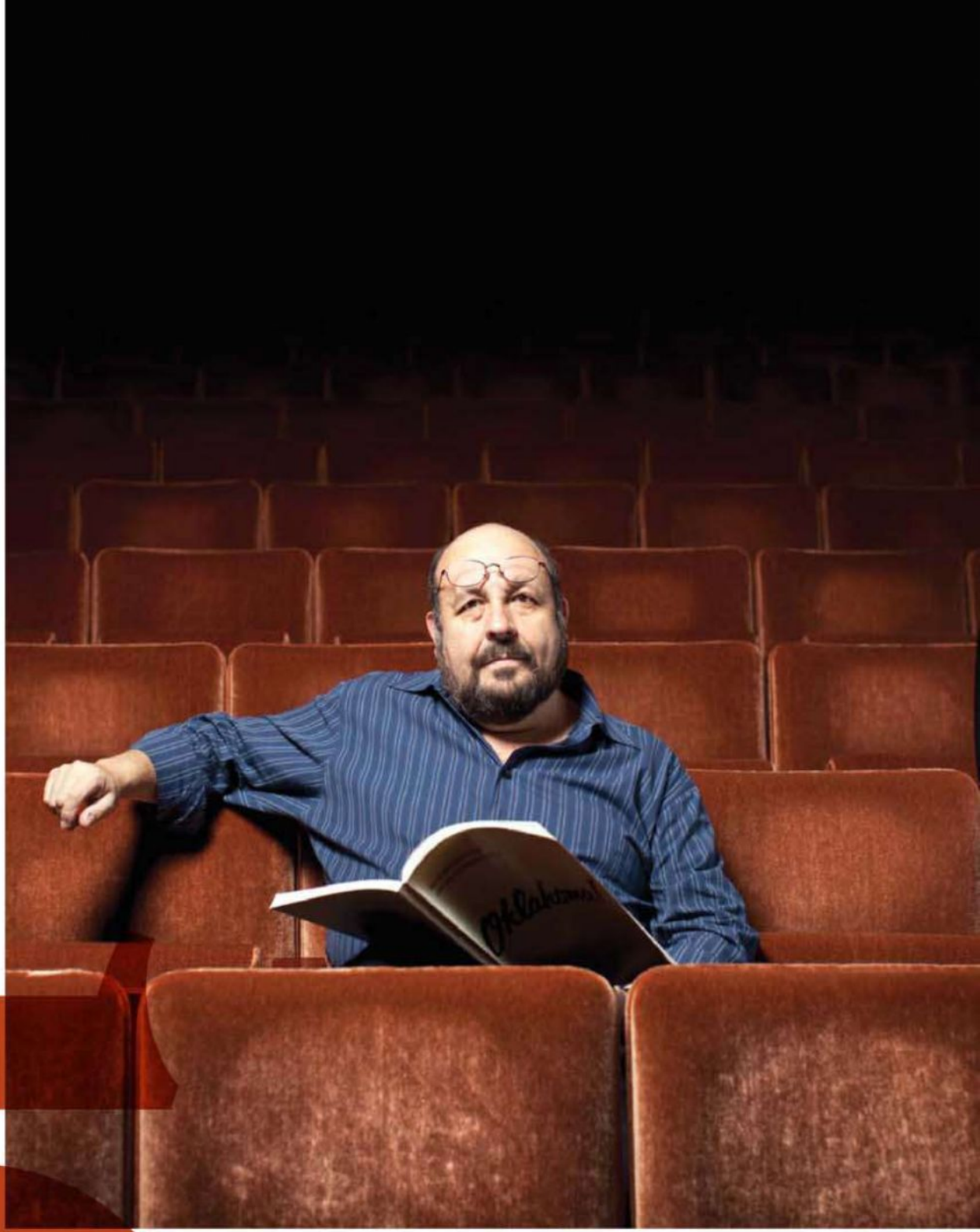
SUPPORTING CAST
SOUTH AFRICAN BY BIRTH, BERG HAS SPENT 23 YEARS SHAPING CCM STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN A MOST AMERICAN ART FORM: MUSICAL THEATER.



Luck. You need it, but it's the one thing no one can give you. Some people *have it and land on Broadway. It's crazy. We can train you to the hilt, yet there's just no substitute for being in the right place at the right time. When the door opens, you have to be ready.* ¶Aubrey Berg, the Patricia A. Corbett distinguished chair of musical theater at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, is teaching a class called Audition Techniques, and on this sunny October morning he is doing two things: First, he's listing, in reverse order, the "10 special skills" that anyone who hopes to make a life in musical theater must acquire; second, he's examining headshots—photographs he's collected from working actors, who send them to agents, producers, casting directors, or anyone else who might have a job to offer. He's grilling his students—in

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this case, juniors—about the 8-by-10 glossies, focusing on the ones that have maximum impact.

"Tell me about *her,*" he says, pointing to one of more than a score of black and white photographs.

"She's nice, she's genuine," a student says, a little hesitantly.

"How do you *know?*" says Berg.

Then, turning to another photo, he asks: "Do you trust her? Why not?" He never raises his voice but he never lets the students off the hook. "Would you date him?" he asks about the picture of a young man that someone describes as "quirky."

"Remember," Berg says, "casting has to do with sex appeal, so you should look hot."

Headshots elicit from Berg a strong point of view, as does everything relevant to theater. "You need to exude confidence, or why would I be interested in you?" he proclaims. He likes front-facing shots, but allows exceptions. In one photo, an actress Berg identifies as "Sally Ann," an especially comely young woman, turns her face slightly away from the camera.

"If you look like Sally Ann," says Berg, "you can look any way you want."

9. Good information, advice, help. Can you name

all the musicals currently running on Broadway? You need to be able to. Name a national tour currently on the road. Whom will you trust? You will get a lot of advice, some of it quite bad. You need to be discerning.

Berg has been in his position at CCM for 23 years. In that time, he has directed well over 50 musicals—most for CCM, but some for other stages, like the upcoming *The Marvelous Wonderettes* at Ensemble Theater—with a level of professionalism and a sureness of touch that would grace any New York stage. He has graduated more than 300 students, following their careers the way a father follows his children. His protégés play in regional theater companies, chorus lines, touring shows, cruise ship ensembles, and theme parks nationwide. Some play on Broadway; the pantheon of CCM graduates currently cast in Broadway shows and national tours includes Karen Olivo, class of 1997, who won a Tony last June for her rendition of Anita in the current revival of *West Side Story.* In the process, Aubrey Berg has brought rare distinction to UC's musical theater program, resulting in more than 800 applicants annually vying to win one of the 20 to 25 freshman slots.

What is his magic? It depends upon whom you ask—student, colleague, administrator—but all agree that Berg has a vision about his work and knows exactly how to get it out of his students. "He knows what he wants and has a remarkable way of making it happen," says Diana Lala, his choreographer for 21 years.

R. Terrell Finney Jr., head of the division of opera, musical theater, drama, arts administration, theater design, and production at CCM, and Berg's boss, puts it this way: "The fact that he's surrounded by colleagues and students who are the best, his obsession with quality and excellence, his confidence that the students will consistently meet his high expectations, all have allowed him to demand a level of excellence that he might not achieve in a lesser institution."

Berg himself is less definitive. "There is no magic, only experience," he says. "I've been doing it for a very long time."

Unlike the two previous chairs of CCM's musical theater program, the charismatic Jack Rouse (who went on to run Kings Island productions and found his own theatrical production consulting company, and who serves on a slew of local boards) and the bombastic Worth Gardner (who left CCM to become artistic director of Playhouse in the Park for several years in the 1980s), Berg seems inherently shy. He has a low profile in the larger Cincinnati community, and that appears to be by choice. Thus his final pronouncement on his *modus operandi:* "I always felt the only real thing I have to offer is to be in a room with students."

8. Freedom from inhibitions and entanglements.

Everyone needs their own code of morality, but the more closed you are—example: you refuse to take off your shirt—the more you limit yourself. And if you're offered a national tour, would you turn it down if, say, you want to stay with your sweetie in Chicago?

Berg is 59. He grew up in South Africa, nurtured by parents who took him frequently to the theater. He saw Shakespeare, Shaw, and Ibsen as a child. He majored in drama at the University of Capetown and directed his first musical at 18—a production of *Stop the World—I Want to Get Off.* After graduation, he studied in England at the British Drama League and the Bristol Old Vic Theater School.

But he wanted to come to America. "Musical theater is the great contribution of America to world culture," he says. "It is the single most popular theater form today." He earned a Ph.D. in theater arts from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1979 and went immediately into directing. "I think that's what I always wanted to do," he recalls. "I have acted, but I prefer being on the other side of the footlights." Perhaps that has something to do with one of his few performance stints, which earned him his nickname—Bubba. It's short for BubbaLou Clemson, a self-imposed pseudonym from many years ago when he was both directing and acting in the same production and reluctant to credit himself twice in the playbill.

Integral to this decision to direct was his instructor/mentor at Illinois, Burnett Hobgood. One of the great teachers of theater and directing of his time, he was, Berg says, "a great theorist" as well. "Hob instilled a love of teaching in me. Before that, I thought of being just a director." Upon graduation, Berg signed on at Catawba College in North Carolina, where he worked for two years. The second job, at Birmingham-Southern College, lasted six. Then Terrell Finney, an Alabama colleague who had moved on to UC, recruited him here.

Berg likes to cook, read, travel, and go to movies. But with a schedule that often keeps him in rehearsals until late at night, or out of town viewing auditions through much of the winter, or busy readying students for the department's annual New York showcase (the production that exposes students to agents, producers, and directors), he has little time • CONTINUED ON PAGE 161

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She was molested as a child, raised in foster care, and living on her own before she turned 16. Now she's a young adult trying to rebuild her life, and she needs your help. So you give it. But each time you think it can't get any worse, it does.

The unbearable darkness of being a miracle worker.

by Chris Santoro
illustration by Martin O'Neill

On a frigid morning in January 2008, I got a call from Melissa.* "I'm going to school!" the 23-year-old blurted out. "I'm gonna get off welfare, get a job, and I'm moving out of this crime zone. I don't care about breaking my lease, I gotta get my kids out of the Fay [Apartments]."

"Oh yeah," she added, almost as an afterthought. "The ER said I need an ultrasound. Where do I get one?"

melissa's phone calls often skid into my world like this—long, screeching train wrecks careening dangerously close to the cliff. She calls me because she needs help, and because I am the person who has offered it. For several years I was a CASA volunteer—a Court Appointed Special Advocate working with teens in foster care. I regularly made recommendations to magistrates and caseworkers: Where should the kids live? Did they need therapy? How was school going? In the process, I'd seen a mountain of statistics about what happens to foster kids when they turn 18 and "age out" of the system to face the adult world alone. I knew that the odds were against Melissa getting off government assistance, or finishing her education, or finding a decent job. But when she called me that snowy day, she sounded so optimistic and confident. So confident, in fact, that it gave me confidence in her.

That's all it takes, I thought. Hard work and determination are all any of us need to succeed in life. Well, hard work and determination plus guidance from a stable adult. Six months after that January telephone call, I quit my job and became that person for Melissa.

I had met Melissa a few years earlier, after she aged out of the Hamilton County foster care system. I wasn't her CASA, but I knew about her case. She'd been through the wringer. What hooked me was her determination to succeed. I felt sure I could make a difference, that Melissa didn't have to be one of those grim statistics. But now I've spent two years in Melissa's world. I've attended meetings with her at Job and Family Services, helped her move into subsidized housing, sat in public assistance lines with her, appealed and fought a sanction when she lost government aid. And the truth is, I'm no longer sure about my nose-

**This person's name has been changed to protect her privacy.*

to-the-grindstone theory. I'm no longer sure that Melissa will ever be self-sufficient, even with my help. When kids are treated badly and neglected, when they lack the life skills that most parents drive into their kids all their lives, when they miss so many weeks and years of school, is it even realistic to think they can ever catch up?

I had expected barriers and roadblocks when I made the decision to work with Melissa. What I hadn't expected was such a deep, dark hole, where every toehold gives way abruptly, nowhere near the top. Where it's just easier, less frustrating, to resign one's self to life at the bottom. It takes a lot more than hard work to pull a person up out of that seemingly bottomless hole. How much more? I'm beginning to think it takes a miracle.

the first thing you notice about melissa—tough, lanky, built like a dancer—are her eyes. They are a startling green. Wary. Constantly monitoring her surroundings, like a tigress. The second thing you notice is that she's stunning. Men of all ages turn to stare at her, sometimes rudely. She openly scorns them. "What are *you* looking at?" she'll snap.

But if you see the crinkles and dimples that overtake Melissa's face when she smiles, if you hear her tinkling giggle, she seems like a different person altogether. And it's hard to reconcile that smile with the trauma that has dogged her all her life.

I had expected barriers when I made the decision to work with Melissa. What I hadn't expected was such a deep, dark hole.

Melissa doesn't remember when the trouble started; the first call to Children's Services was made before she could talk. Somewhere along the line a caseworker created a "life book"—a scrapbook of childhood photos and mementoes. Melissa remembers that. "It told me so much stuff I didn't know," she says. "Like how I had a little brother who died of dehydration and neglect even though my family told me a different story: that he died a quick death."

Melissa loved her mother in that grab-her-around-the-knees-so-she-can't-walk way. When an avalanche of medical conditions began to take their toll on her mother, a wheelchair became just a bigger part of what Melissa wrapped her arms around. A relative took them in, but in the memory of a 5-year-old, "It was *me* who took care of my mama." Melissa says she remembers changing her mother's Depends and feeding her, and taking care of another younger brother. She was only 7 when her mother died, and it devastated her.

In the chaos driving Melissa's life, education took a backseat. No one taught her colors. No one read her books. She was behind before she even started school and she has never caught up. It seemed Melissa was doomed to live in a world where bad people did bad things to her. "I didn't want to go home after school, *ever*," she says. When she was 9, an adult acquaintance sexually molested her. A neighbor called the police and the case went to court—Melissa cowering on the stand, caseworkers hovering over her so she wouldn't have to look at the perpetrator. The man went to prison; Melissa went back to live with her relative.

I've only heard Melissa talk about this once, in the presence of a social worker. But it must have traumatized her deeply. One rainy afternoon, while the other kids were skipping home to watch after-school specials, Melissa came up with a plan. She would run away. If Melissa had learned anything in life up until then it was this: No one was going to take care of her; she'd have to do it herself. Again and again Melissa would run. She didn't care where.

This sad semblance of family life ended when Melissa and her brother were placed in the custody of the Hamilton County foster care system. They were taken downtown. Assigned a case number. They would not remain together.

But the running didn't stop. Melissa ran from every foster home she was placed in. "Looking back now," she says, "I think I ran because I never wanted to live with a family. Maybe because I ● CONTINUED ON PAGE 166

SPRING SENSATIONS

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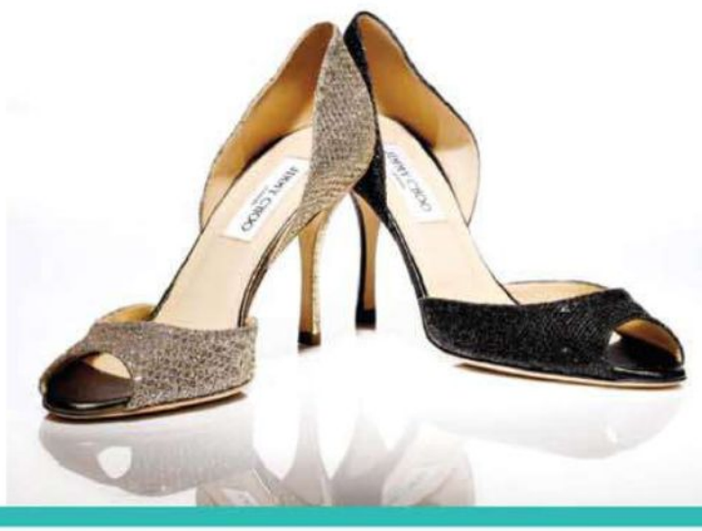

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SPRING SENSATIONS

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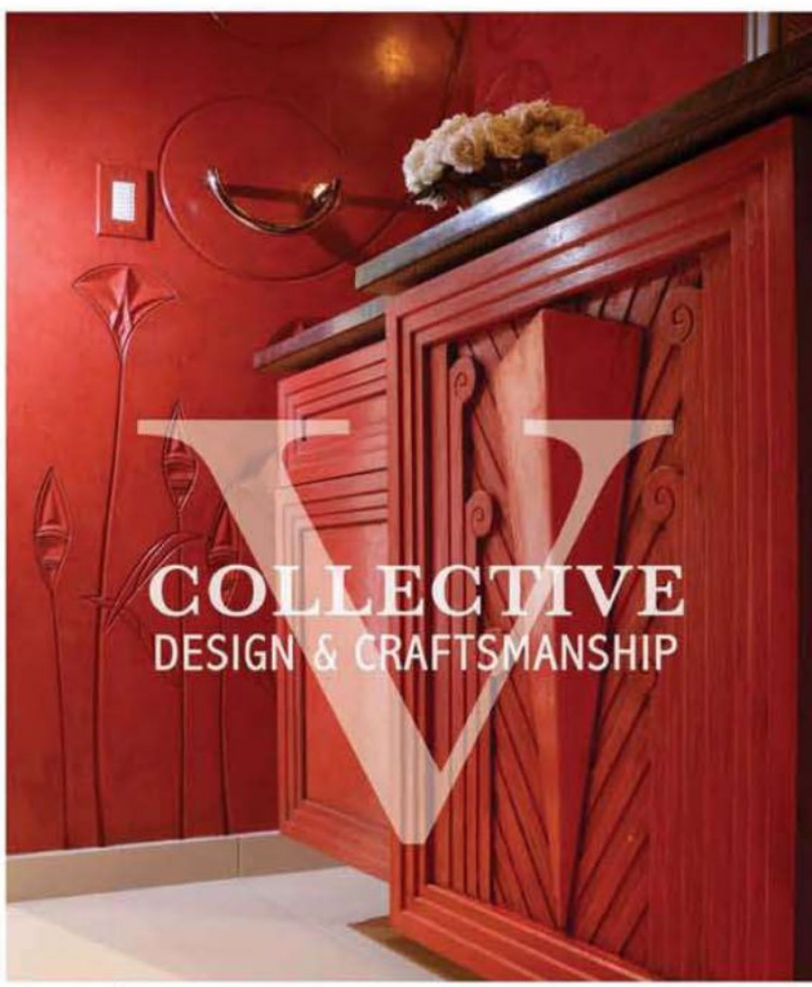

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table of contents

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AT THE SHOW

Parking Map & Show Information..... H8

Exhibitor List H10

Show Floor Plan.....H12

Cincinnati Magazine Show Garden Awards.....H16

People's Choice Award Ballot ..... between H16 & H17

Show Gardens H18

Seminar Schedule H24

H26
Vegetable Gardening from Amendments to Zucchini
Everything you need to know to put fresh homegrown vegetables on your dinner table.

H34
Meet the Coneheads
A broad spectrum of year-round color captivates local conifer gardeners.

H44 ***2010 Home Remodeling Hit List***
Discover this year's top projects.

H50 ***Color Charting***
The rules have changed...here's what you need to know now.

H56 ***Exterior Design***
Diane Kidd used her interior design savvy to transform her outdoor space.

H64 ***Shop Talk***
Industry insiders share their personal home projects for 2010.

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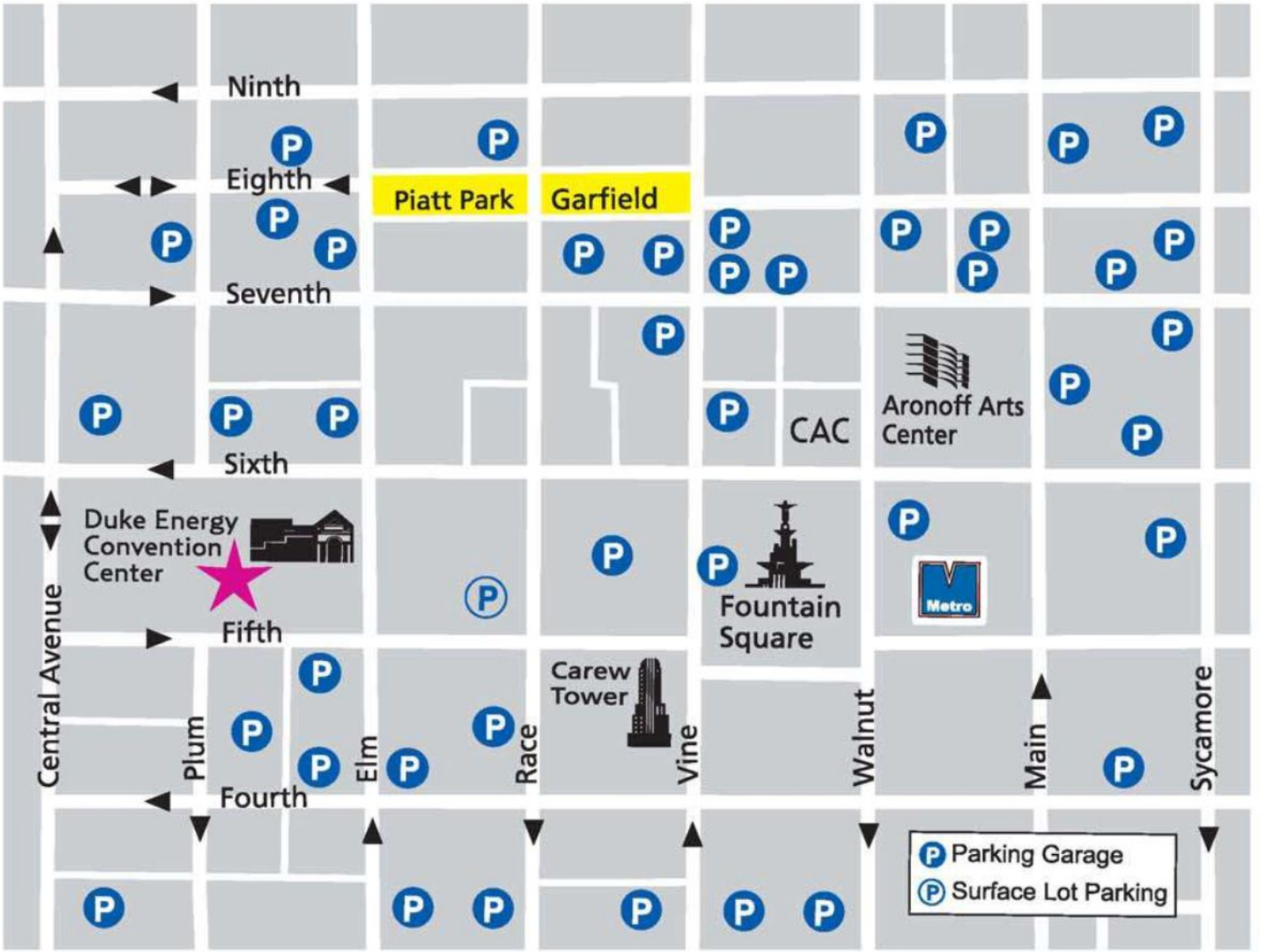

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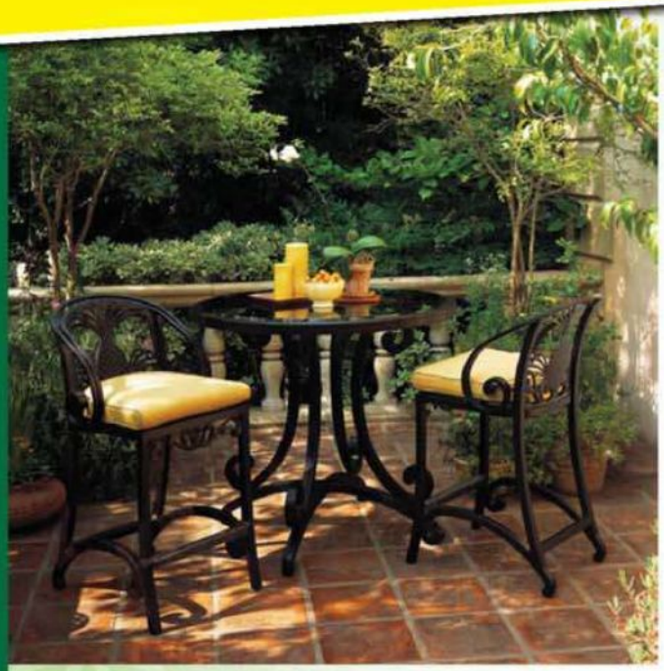

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VENDOR..... BOOTH
360 Painting of Ohio, LLC.....1333
A & B Granicrete Cincinnati LLC.....1081
ATAC LLC Pond Management Specialist.....233
A-1 Ohio Valley RetroFoam.....737
Ace Fence.....214
Ace Hardware.....444
Advanced Stone Masonry.....234
Advanced Wall and Paver Design, LLC..... G-1A
AE Door and Window Co..... 651-657, 850-856
Affinity Remodel & Restoration.....1491
Affordable Home Security ADT.....929
Agean.....330-332, 331-335, 430-434, 436
Air-Tite Home Products.....1100
Aladdin Pools.....645
Allgood Home Improvement.....1335
American Chimney & Masonry.....236
American Family Insurance.....460
Ammon-Jones Landscape.....1235
Anchor Pools.....216
Andersen Windows & Doors..... 1317-1323, 1516-1522
Andy Loschiavo Custom Decks.....848
Angie's List.....935
Apollo Heating & Cooling.....1045-1049
Aquatic & Garden Decor.....1221
Arborx Tree Specialists.....1053
Arronco Comfort Air.....1261
Artistic Furniture Restoration.....671
Ashley Remodeling/Patrick's Flooring.....483-485
Attic Experts/Owens Corning Insulation.....734, 736
Back Tree Service.....1243-1245
Bard Nurseries, Inc..... G-5, Garden Store
BARNA Log Homes of Southern Ohio.....1129
Bartlett Tree Experts.....307
The Basement Guys.....1336
Basement Living Systems & KAC Remodeling.863
The Basement Tuxedo.....934 - 936
Bath Fitter.....700-706, 1301-1303
Bath Solutions, Inc.....1121-1123
BeauVerre Riordan Stained Glass Studio...673-675
Best Barn.....1533
Bill Spade Electric, Inc.....1063
Brandstetter's Kanga Roof.....1287
Buckeye Power Sales.....926
Buckeye Putting Greens, LLC.....220-222
Budget Blinds.....1265-1269
Building Value.....1304-1306
Butler Water Systems, LLC.....740
C & D The Home Enhancers.....1441
California Closets.....484
Cambria.....668-670
CEI Sports, Inc.....486-490
CertaPro Painters.....1495-1501
Champion Window.....875-1264
Cherry Blossom Design.....465
Chimney Works & Rocky Mountain Stoves.....725
Cincinnati Bath Resoration Professionals, Inc.....1260
Cincinnati Closets LLC.....1434
Cincinnati Gaslite Co.....1237-1239
Cincinnati Glass Block Co.....1112-1116
Cincinnati Habitat for Humanity ReStore.....905
Cincinnati Home Theaters.....1812
***Cincinnati Magazine*.....G-20**
Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Honda Dealers.....L3, 315
Cincinnati Pool Distributor..... 201-203, 300-302
Cincinnati Ready-Mix.....1051
Cincinnati Tile & Stone.....861
Cincy Paint Pro.....1534
Civic Garden Center..... G-1C
Classic Kitchen Design.....881-883
Closet Tailors.....1265-1269
Closets By Design.....870-874
Colonial Post & Fence.....324-326
Comfort Zones Landscaping.....1054-1056
Countertops and Cabinetry By Design.....900
Craftsmen Electric, Inc.....1425
Craftsmen Home Improvements, Inc.....1619-1631
Creative Concrete LLC.....224
Cru Cutters Landscape & Lawn Care.....115-117
Custom Distributors, Inc..... 921-927, 1120-1126
Custom Outdoor Structures.....420-422
Custom Railing, Inc.....860-862
Custom Rebath Cincinnati.....908-912
Custom Wood Products, Inc.....1814-1818
Dan The Doorman, Inc..... 1139-1141, 1338-1340
Dan Tye Photography.....1408
DB Lawn & Landscape, Inc.....306-308
Decks by Design, Inc. USA.....109
Decks-N-More, Inc.....1048
DeckTech's, Inc.....228
Deco Scapes.....301-303
Decorating Den Interiors.....660
Deer Park Roofing, Inc.....1107
Design R Crete.....1246
Designer Drapes & More.....672
Distinctive Closets.....907
Distinctive Door, Inc.....662
Dogwatch Hidden Fences.....735
Dragonfly Stained Glass.....1445
Drapery Innovations.....467
Duke Energy.....473-475
Dwyer Companies.....840
Eads Fence Co., Inc.....200-206
Eagle Custom Homes, Inc.....1447
Eclipse Window Tinting..... 100A
EcoEnvironments.....864
EcoFriendly Irrigation.....456
EF International.....L12-L13
Egbers Land Design.....406-408
Egbert's Landscaping & Lawncare.....1252
Elegant Iron Studios.....661-663
Elsmere Ironworks.....1079
Environmetrics, Inc.....888-890
Epiphany Foam Insulation, LLC.....708
EVERDRY Waterproofing.....128-130
Exercise & Leisure Equipment Co.....724-726
Factory Direct Remodeling.....445-447
Ferguson Enterprises.....1433
Ferguson Window Company.....105-107
Fifth Third Bank..... G-21-G-22
Florian Green House Gallery.....G-4
Flower Framers of Cincinnati.....321
The Frontier Furnishings Co., Inc..... 215-217, 314-316
Fullmer's Landscaping, Inc..... G-15 & G-16
Furniture Medic.....137
Gardner's Lawncare.....851
Gary Lord Wall Options Inc.....678
GCS Ironing Systems, LLC.....1505
Geothermal Heating & Cooling.....1530
Gilkey Window Company..... 721-723, 920-922
1-800-GOT-JUNK?.....124-126
Granite Rocks.....1078-1080
Granite Transformations.....1106-1110
Green Farm Resort.....1723-1725
Guardian Protection Services.....1086
H. Hafner & Sons, Inc.....410-412
Habegger Corporation - Carrier Divison..... 712-716, 1134-1136
Hagedorn Appliances..... 1115-1117, 1314-1316
Hammer-Rite.....449-451
Handcrafted Amish Furniture.....1440-1442
Handy Window Shade, Inc.....1456-1458
Handyman Connection.....928 - 930
Health Mate Sauna.....1490-1492
Heitker Concrete Inc.....1050-1052
Hendel's Affordable Tree Service.....226
Heritage Log Homes.....1279
HICON Inc.....400-402, 404
Hilltop Cabinet.....1320-1322
Holdfast Technologies, LLC.....1421
The Home Depot.....100
The Home Place.....231
Home-Tek Solutions.....334
Honda East Power Equipment.....L-8-L11
The Hoosier Wallbed Co.....689 - 691
Horizons Ltd.....520-522
Ideal Garage Solutions.....1130-1132
Illumiza & Mosquitonix.....205-207
Imagine Landscape Possibilities, LLC..... G-1B
Impressive Creations, Inc.....336
Invisible Fence Co. of Cincinnati.....844-846
Isaacs' Shaker Hill.....679-681
J&D Basement Systems.....1523
J.R. Morris Landscaping.....G-2
Jack Boiman Sons & Daughters Inc.....1247
Jacob Bros. Heating and Air Conditioning.....720-722
James Hardie.....885-887
Jasper Contractors.....738
JCPenney Custom Decorating.....687
John Block Deck Contractor.....1104
Jones Fish Hatcheries, Inc.....1205
JP Flooring Design Center..... 453-457, 652-656
K & B Hardwood Flooring.....866
Kaiser Siding and Roofing.....1622
Kelly Bros. Home & Design Center..... 1115-1117, 1314-1316
Kessler Interior Trim Professionals.....1444-1446
Kinsella Kitchen & Bath.....1526-1528
Kirkwood's Sweeper Shop, Inc.....715-717
Kitchen Cabinet Painted Finishes.....1330
Kitchen Solutions.....913
Kitchen Tune-Up.....1331

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exhibitor list

Klimat Master Pools.....1040
Knickerbocker Gallery 487-491, 686-690
Kolbe Windows and Doors by Gilkey.....1454
KT Design Group.....879
Lake's Landscape.....G-23
Landscape Patio Supply.....G-17
Leaffilter North, Inc.....924
Libbee's Landscaping & Grounds Management.....1244
Liberty Bell Wall Designs, Inc. 683
Lichtenberg Landscaping, Inc. G-13
Lighthouse Landscape Lighting.....G-1D
Lisa Sandlin Design-Houses That Work For Life!.....L4, L5
Losas Designs, Ltd.....1109
Louiso Lawn Care and Landscaping Inc. 229
Lykins Companies.....939-941
M Scape.....230
Marsh Building Products.... 1273-1277, 1474-1478
Masterpiece Audio/Video & Automation ..682-684
Matrix Electrical Service.....868
Matthew's Wall Anchor SVC of Ohio 1084
Mattress Firm.....1805-1811
McCabe Do-It Center.....309-311
McCabe Lumber.....1300
McKenzie Lawn & Landscape.....1429-1431
McMaken Custom Sunrooms, Inc.....1515
Mees Distributors, Inc.....480-482
Metro Design Kitchen + Bath.....884-886
Meyer Aquascapes, Inc. G-12
Mid America Glass Block / Bath Doctor....728-732
Mid West Accessibility Products LLC.....1138-1140
Mid West Grounds LLC G-6
Midwest Stone Scapes 208
Miller's Furniture.....1324-1328
Modern Wood Elements, Inc. 674
Modlich Stoneworks Inc. 878-880
More Specialty Plants & Landscaping ...1201-1203
Mr. Sandless 1532
Murals By Jeff Mosby 685
Murphy Home Improvement, Inc. 1310-1312, 1311-1313
Natorp's Landscape.....328
Nature Stone 101-103
Neal's Design Remodel.....1240
Nelson Comfort Heating, Air Conditioning & Electric.....906
Nieman Plumbing, Inc. 909-911
NiteLites 1241
Ohio Custom Closets 666
Ohio Mulch Supply.....210-212
Ohio Tile & Marble..... 1115-1117, 1314-1316
Ohio Utilities Protection Service.....313
Ohio Valley Lightning Protection.....932
Ohio Valley Stone Products, LLC.....849
On Deck Services 101A, 200A
Outdoor Furniture Restoration 1248
Overhead Door Co. of Greater Cincinnati, Inc..... 739-741, 938-940
Overhead Door Company of Northern Kentucky 1283-1285, 1484-1486
Patio & Hearth 221-225, 320-324
Patio Enclosures, Inc. 640
Patterned Concrete of Cincinnati.....1254-1256
Pavestone Company 1430-1432
Pella Windows & Doors..... 1083-1091, 1282-1291
Pendery Construction, Inc. 889-891
Perfect Lawn & Landscapes.....648-650
Perrino Landscape, Inc. .....G-9 - G-10
Pilot Lumber 1466-1470
PODS.....1727-1729
Premier Garage 1327-1329
Premier Granite & Stone .....L6 - L7
Premier Home Enhancements.....1133-1137
Premier Landscape & Irrigation Services...647-649
Primax Home Center.....707
Priority 1 Construction Services, Inc. 1250
Professional Tree Care 847
Pro-Stump.....845
Queen City Awning 1231-1233
Queen City Cake and Sugar Art Show.....L1 (March 12-14)
Ray St. Clair Roofing, Inc. 1251-1257
Recreations Outlet.....1465
Restoration Piping Technologies.....909-911
Rhinoshield Tri State Coating 709
Rich Traditions! 527
Richards Electric Supply Co., Inc. 710
Ridge Structures 304
Riverbend Music Center/PNC Pavilion..... L18A
Riverbend Timber Framing.....914-916
Riverspan Regional Art Alliance, Inc.....L14-L17
RKC Increte.....855-857
Roof Cleaners Plus.....705
RoofTime 933
Ryan's All Glass..... 1305-1307, 1504-1506
Safeway Safety Step LLC 904
Sauder Woodworking Co. 1262
Schauff Landscaping LLC.....G-11
Schumacher & Co. Custom Hardwood 931
Scotts Lawn Service 305
Searcy Wood 882
Seiler's Landscaping G-18
Select Comfort 1475
Seuberling & Co., LLC.....327
Shehan Pools.....1055-1057
Sherriff-Goslin Roofing Co.....1802-1803
Showcase Remodeling 1088-1090
Siegle Design Center 1128
Silver Rabbit Studio 479
Smithscapes.....G-7
Solar Connection Tubular Sky Lights.....1131
Solar Technology, Inc.....853
Solar Tint 1308
Solid Surface Concepts/Factory Direct Countertops 1278-1280
Sound Advice, LLC 1443
Southern Ohio WSR 125
Southwest Greens of Ohio 1615-1617
Stained Glass Overlay 915-917
Starry Night Gallery.....1450-1452
Star-S Industries / Aqua Jet.....129
Static All Pro Services 1427
Stone Design LLC.....1125-1127
Summer Accents, LLC 461-463
Summerfair Cincinnati L18
Teasdale Fenton Carpet Cleaning & Restoration 1436-1438
Tellup Construction L.L.C. 1611
Tenon Construction, LLC 1480
Tepe Services.....G-19, 1207
Time Warner Cable 140, 141, 142
Tim's Pools & Spas..... 1337-1341, 1536-1538
Towne Remodeling.....1448
TowneScapes, LLC.....310 - 312
Tree Images 211-213
Trim Masters 1620
Tri-State Bomanite, Inc. 209
Tri State Retractable Screens.....1289-1291
Tri State Sealwize.....111
Tri-State Solar Systems, LLC 937
TruStone Distributors Ltd.....644-646
Undercover Systems.....323
Unique Coverings.....665
USA Insulation.....1511
Valley Insulation, LLC.....1061
Vanderwist of Cincinnati Inc 301A
Visionary Design & Remodeling.....711-713
Wallbuilders Corporation 227
Wardway Fuels, Inc.....1044-1046
Watercolor by Karl Feng.....1510
Watkins Seamless Gutters 731-733
Watson's of Cincinnati 1211, 1411
Weaver Barns.....1689-1691
Weickert's Corp. 1060-1062
Weller Roofing.....1082
Wenning Landesign Studio 424-426
Werbrich's Landscaping.....G-1
Whitetail Acres Tree Farm & Landscaping.. 235-237
Widmer's Cleaners.....1500-1502
Willis Heating & Air Conditioning 1332-1334
Windows Plus, Ltd. 1485
Wing Enterprises - Little Giant Ladder Systems...454
Wm. Light Paving Co.....1249
Wooden Nickel Antiques.....667-669
Wow Window Boxes.....440
Yardscapes By Dianne G-3
The Zero Company.....121-123

GARDEN MARKET

Aqua-Gems/Brightspots.....515 (March10-14 only)
Company's Comin' 559
Country Manor Mixes LLC.....501
Cutco Cutlery 510
D and M Wooden Flowers and Vases.....511
Elizabeth's Closet – Baubles Bling & More.....513
EZ Hang Chairs.....539
H & P International Garden Tools.....503
It's In The Details, Ltd. 556
Ivy Basket.....505
JT Flags 517
Jules Gems.....535
The Junior League of Cincinnati.....536
Mary's Boutique/Design Jewelry 509
Merry Maids.....565
Montero Native Art LLC 506
Ohio Valley Flower Farm 552
Orange Lustre Products.....507
Otazu Jewels 526
Ottoman Imports.....523-525
Parsley Pottery.....521
The Silverlady II 500
TGS Trading/Strictly Bamboo.....540
Uncommon USA, Inc. 502-504
WendyWear.....512
Wildtree.....541

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show garden awards

1

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3

WINNING WAYS

Cincinnati Magazine Fourth Annual Show Garden Awards

Anticipation mounts as our panel of judges prepares to reveal the 2010 Show Garden Award winners at the Fifth Third Bank Cincinnati Home & Garden Show, Presented by Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Honda Dealers. Award categories include: Best of Show, Best Hardscape Element and Best Use of Color. Winning gardens will be showcased online at www.cincinnatimagazine.com and in the June 2010 issue of *Cincinnati Magazine* Home & Garden.

1. 2009 Best Hardscape Element: Spring Hearth by Seiler's Landscaping 2. 2009 Best of Show: Spring Unfurled by Fullmer's Landscaping 3. 2009 Best Use of Color: Tranquility Base by LTD Landscapes Inc.

JOIN US FOR THE LIVE PRESENTATION:

Saturday, March 6, 2010
11:15 am

2009 WINNERS

Best of Show:
Spring Unfurled by Fullmer's Landscaping
Best Use of Color:
Tranquility Base by LTD Landscapes Inc.
Best Hardscape Element:
Spring Hearth by Seiler's Landscaping

2008 WINNERS

Best of Show:
Western Reprieve by Garden Works Inc.
Best Use of Color: A Clockwork Orange by Natorp's Inc.
Best Hardscape Element:
Southern Inspiration by Tepe Environmental Services Ltd.

2007 WINNERS

Best of Show:
Dining "Al Fresco" by Perrino Landscape Inc.
Best Use of Color: The Tropical Garden by J.R. Morris Landscaping.
Best Hardscape Element:
Urban Escape by Tepe Environmental Services Ltd.

NEW FOR 2010!
People's Choice Award

You're invited to vote for your favorite garden. Fill out the attached ballot and return to:

[CincinnatiMagazine]
GARDEN BOOTH #20

Ballots accepted through 2 pm on March 13. The People's Choice Show Garden Award winner will be announced Saturday, March 13.

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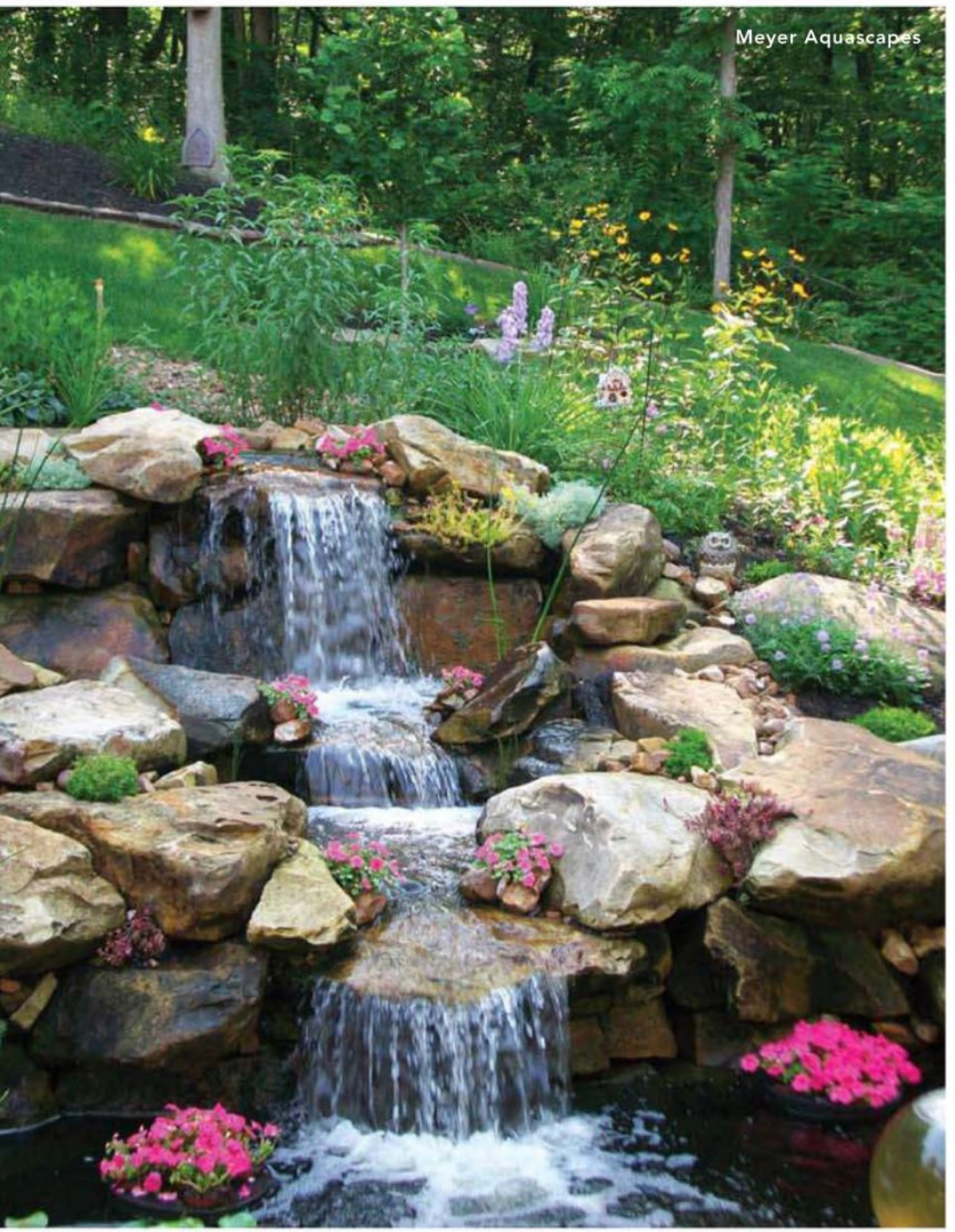

FREE SPIRIT

Close the window on winter and open the door to spring with gardens in bloom at the 2010 Fifth Third Bank Cincinnati Home & Garden Show® Presented by Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Honda Dealers. Style, sustainability and creativity take center stage with a 'Free Spirit' theme. Eighteen show gardens stand ready to remind you that summer fun is just around the corner, and if you like, no farther away than your own backyard.

GARDEN #1
Appalachian Spring
by Werbrich's Landscaping

Peer through the lush trees and blooming rhododendrons and discover a waterwheel as it runs a gristmill in the Appalachian woodlands. A natural spring tumbling out of the highlands powers the wheel. Large shade trees create a canopy as you walk toward the waterwheel and past woodland ferns and wildflowers. The gristmill is nestled among hemlock trees, typical of those found in Appalachian ravines. The heart of the garden offers the feeling of a bygone era when pioneers harnessed nature's power for their daily work.

GARDEN #1C
Homegrown Gardening
by Civic Garden Center of Greater Cincinnati

The Civic Garden Center of Greater Cincinnati wants to inspire you to create your own homegrown garden. The scene features seed-starting racks with spring vegetables and ornamental plants ready to go into the garden. Rain barrels catch water from a roof to irrigate plants, and a compost system is in place to create healthy soil for an incredible garden. CGC's garden offers a glimpse of their newest project, *The Green Learning Station,* which demonstrates these and many other sustainable gardening practices.

GARDEN #2
A Patio Paradise
by J.R. Morris Landscaping

Dreams do come true. Delight in a little luxury in your own backyard paradise. Relax on an earth-blend colored patio surrounded by lush foliage and colorful flowers. Invigorate your senses with the fragrances of diverse flora and the soothing sounds of moving water. Let the peaceful setting of this patio design enhance your outdoor living experience.

GARDEN #3
Free Spirit
by Yardscapes by Dianne, LLC

Enter a space that is relaxing, meditative and verdant. A flagstone path leads visitors through a woodland garden with distinctive plantings. Statuary from Pietro Stone-

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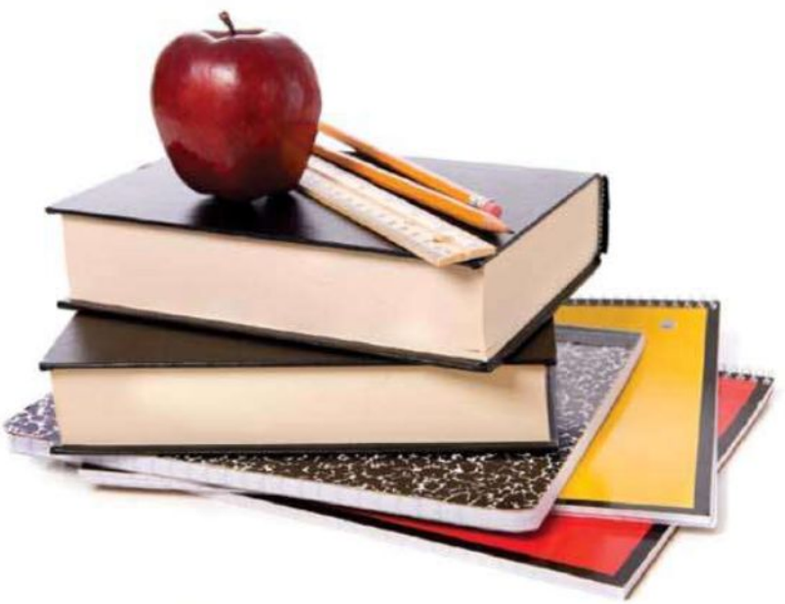

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show gardens

ware creates eye-catching interest among flowering and non-flowering evergreens, masses of perennials and native flowering bulbs. Find crabapple, dogwood, redbud, azalea, barberry, ninebark, fothergilla, hydrangea, hosta, daisies, daffodils and muscari, among others.

GARDEN #4
Think Green: With a Greenhouse
by Florian Green House Gallery

Take your green thumb and your grower's passion to the next step with a delightful greenhouse. The structure easily incorporates into your landscape and can be surrounded with a mix of plant materials in various textures, colors and heights. Take your cues from the professionally sculpted garden seen here with plant materials from Bard Nurseries & Landscaping. This gardener's delight will extend your growing season and allow an early start for your best blooms.

GARDEN #5 & GARDEN STORE
Bard's Mill
by Bard Nurseries & Landscaping

Creativity and wonder lead to an encounter with Bard's mill at the heart of this garden. The water wheel spins, creating gentle splashes in the garden pond. Blue and white hyacinths and red tulips guide you along a flagstone path. Fat Albert spruce, London Plane tree, Golden Redwoods and Endless Summer 'Twist N Shout' hydrangea are just a few of the unique specimens waiting to be discovered. Wander through the Garden Store on the way out to find more inspiring ideas for garden art, garden supplies, plants and baskets—everything you need to put a "spring" in your step and jump-start your next project.

GARDEN #6
Split-Personality Garden
by Midwest Grounds Landscape Solutions

Relaxation or recreation? It's your choice. Enter this lush garden under a rustic wooden trellis, and you'll find yourself in a serene seating area beneath three redbuds. Relax and enjoy the view of a sheer waterfall disappearing into a tranquil pond. Wind your way around a sensuous curving wall surrounded by blossoming rhododendrons and azaleas, and you'll encounter a lively party space complete with a custom outdoor bar. Grab a beverage and ascend into the dining booth where you can roast marshmallows at the firepit table and peer down at the pond below.

GARDEN #7
Spring At Last
by SmithScapes, LLC

Inspired by the formal gardens of Savannah, Ga., this garden of style offers everything you need to entertain during the day or evening. Natural stone steps lead to the paver patio that surrounds a stone fireplace—a perfect spot to keep you warm on cool evenings. A lower patio keeps everyone entertained with a firepit and outdoor bar. Sit and relax, surrounded by azaleas and eye-catching annuals as a cedar arbor appears to float from above. A soothing water garden nearby adds to the ambiance, creating an ideal spot for you and your guests.

GARDENS #9 & #10
Beyond the Garden Walls
by Perrino Landscape, Inc.

Private walled gardens create an outdoor environment that can be used for year-round enjoyment. Step through the gate to see beyond the garden walls and experience all that lies within. Enjoy a gentle stroll down the stone path beneath the towering London Plane trees. The sound of water charms the senses, along with the visual beauty of flowering azaleas and the feel of security within the walled garden. One can almost taste the culinary delights that await guests at the set table. Lush ivy and holly add a finishing touch to this private space, where serenity is within your grasp.

GARDEN #11
Natural Essence
by Schauff Landscaping

Regional stone and native plants fill this landscape with delightful texture and variety. A large waterfall drops 4 feet to a pondless abyss. Large spruce trees draw the eye vertically to an upper area, which bursts with plant life, including large hydrangeas and ferns. The lower beds contain bubbling rocks, fireplaces and beautiful, natural stone walls.

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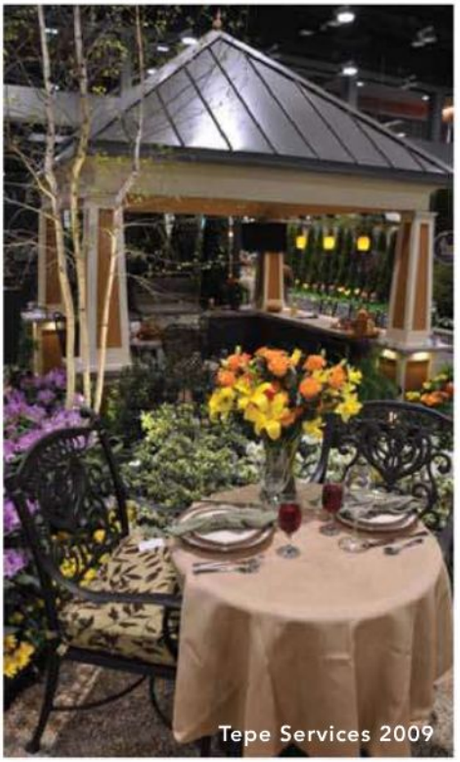

GARDEN #12

Revolutionary Use of Nature's Rain Water!

by Meyer Aquascapes

Step onto this garden's natural-looking stone patio, with firepit and sitting area, and discover a backyard oasis. Evergreens, river birch, crabapple, juniper, ginkgo, sycamore and maple provide plenty of texture and interest. Spring bulbs, heuchera, ferns, hostas and astilbe create another verdant layer. The focal point of the garden is the large waterfall and 20-foot stream. Both contribute to a recirculating Pondless® water feature that also harvests rainwater, creating a self-sustainable system. The stream is framed with natural moss-covered, weathered limestone boulders and ledge rock for an ultimate backyard experience.

GARDEN #13

I Went To The Woods

by Lichtenberg Landscaping, Inc.

Simplify life and enjoy an outdoor retreat that exudes pleasure and relaxation. Follow a bridge crafted of natural timbers as it spans sparkling pools and find your way to a pergola structure with cascading vines and a cozy fireplace with a built-in water feature. Privacy and solitude are defined by the canopies of Japanese maples and ar-

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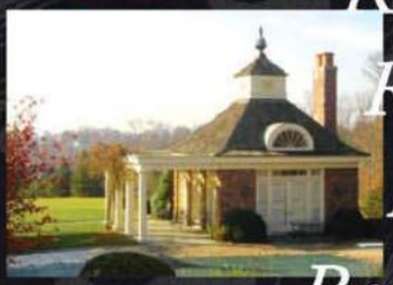

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show gardens

Werbrich's Landscaping 2009

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borvitaes and underplayed with boxwoods, hostas and a bounty of colorful blooms. Calm and free the senses with water, fragrance and a fire's warmth. Enjoy life.

GARDEN #15-16
Sycamore, Stone and Steel
by Fullmer's Landscaping, Inc.

A dappled woodland scene of towering sycamores, banks of groundcovers, ferns and astilbe, slopes down to meet rock outcroppings, which form a circular seat around a dripping limestone slab. Slicing through the forest scene, crisp arcs of weathered steel hold back the shady slopes of greenery, bringing the overarching and underlying lines of the garden into focus. Sheltered in the curve of a massive stacked-stone wall is an intimate eating area, elegant and refined, with windows to the woodland. An overhead sweep of greenery, almost floating above the marching steel piers, spans the adjacent aisle and connects with another island of outdoor living.

GARDEN #17
It's All For You
by Landscape Patio Supply

This garden becomes an extension of your indoor living space. Showcase elements provide a quaint, enjoyable environment for a cozy gathering. The project adapts itself to a variety of outdoor spaces and most backyard environments.

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GARDEN #18
Spring Has Sprung
by Seiler's Landscaping

Tumbled pavers create a low-maintenance and level patio area. The pergola is crafted from cedar, which naturally resists decay and will offer many years of low-maintenance enjoyment. A natural stone fireplace offers a beautiful and functional focal point and is a hot trend in landscaping, allowing homeowners to extend the outdoor season. Seiler's use of native and hardy plants is perfect for any Southwest Ohio backyard.

GARDEN #19
Rustic Retreat
by Tepe Services

Large, elegant birch trees greet garden visitors and define this cozy, outdoor space. The handcrafted, cedar pavilion draws guests in to relax and unwind. A slate paver patio, crackling stone fireplace and a backdrop of Colorado blue spruce create an intimate setting that invites you to rejuvenate the spirit after a long day of work. Sit back and allow the senses to be delighted with colorful blooms of azaleas, rhododendrons and annual flowers in this rustic garden retreat.

GARDEN #21 & #22
A "Loan" in the Garden
by Fifth Third Bank

Relax in this oasis within the Show Gardens, where Fifth Third Bank representatives are available to advise you on all your financing needs. Have you made plans for a new landscape or renovation project? Come learn about financing options to make your dream a reality.

GARDEN #23
Imagination is the Highest Kite
by Lake's Landscape

The designer's children and their love of the outdoors was the inspiration for this garden. Copper statues of children, frolicking through a vibrantly colored spring garden, fly kites of all sizes and shapes. The images play into the Show's theme of "Free Spirit." The children are surrounded by 'Green Velvet' boxwoods, 'Karen' azaleas, 'Autumn Brilliance' amelancher in bloom, hibiscus and multicolored annuals. A copper water fountain is also featured along with a travertine patio and creek-stone wall.

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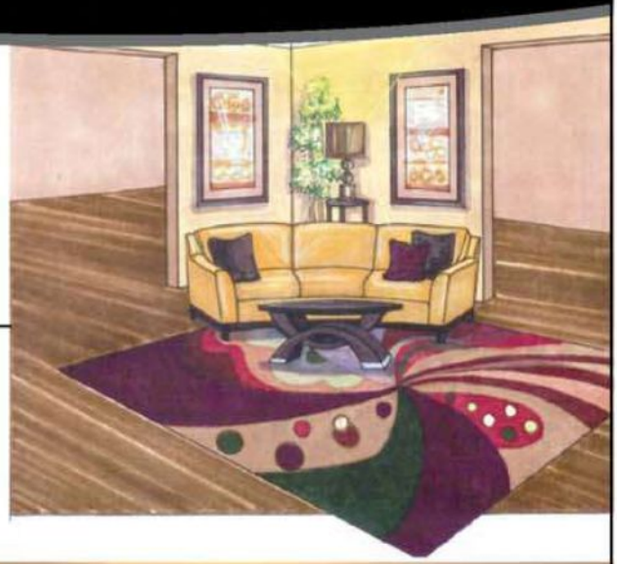

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2010 seminar schedule

Ask The Expert Stage

Saturday, March 6

1 PM Improve Your Dysfunctional Kitchen/Bath, *Cyndi Kohler, Interior Designer and Alan Hendy, Neal's Design/Remodel*

4 PM Emerald Ash Borer, Guaranteed Protection, *ISA Certified Arborist, Tim Back, Back Tree Service*

5 PM Improve Your Dysfunctional Kitchen/Bath, *Cyndi Kohler, Interior Designer and Alan Hendy, Neal's Design/Remodel*

6 PM Landscaping 101, *Bob Bard, Bard Nurseries & Landscaping*

Sunday, March 7

1 PM Closets 101: Harmony in the Bedroom, *Glen Grosser, Closets by Design*

2 PM Foundation/Concrete Protection & Repair—What You Need To Know, *Dave Jacobs, Dwyer Companies*

3 PM Pansy Potting Party for KIDS, *Bard Nurseries & Landscaping*

Wednesday, March 10

3 PM What's Your Shade of Green Remodel?, *Eric Hertzfeld & Neal Hendy CR, GCP, Neal's Design/Remodel*

Thursday, March 11

6 PM Foundation/Concrete Protection & Repair—What You Need To Know, *Dave Jacobs, Dwyer Companies*

Friday, March 12

5 PM Tim Carter, "Ask The Builder"

6 PM What's Your Shade of Green Remodel? *Eric Hertzfeld & Neal Hendy CR, GCP, Neal's Design/Remodel*

Saturday, March 13

1 PM Closets 101: Harmony in the Bedroom, *Glen Grosser, Closets by Design*

2 PM Tim Carter, "Ask The Builder"

4 PM Emerald Ash Borer, Guaranteed Protection, *ISA Certified Arborist, Tim Back, Back Tree Service*

6 PM Tim Carter, "Ask The Builder"

Sunday, March 14

1 PM Minor Remodels with Major Improvement, *Connie Hampton, Interior Designer & Certified Kitchen Designer, and Steve Hendy, Neal's Design/Remodel*

2 PM Tim Carter, "Ask The Builder"

Home Improvement Stage

Saturday, March 6

11:30 AM Patio Design and Paver Installation, *Pavestone Co.*

1 PM Lawn Care and Restoration, *The Scotts Company*

3 PM Container Gardening, Bell Nursery

5 PM Trees and Shrubs in YOUR Landscape, *Bell Nursery*

Sunday, March 7

11:30 AM Backyard BBQ Grilling with Weber Grills

1:30 PM Lawn Care and Restoration, *The Scotts Company*

3:30 PM Vegetable Gardening to Lower Your Grocery Bill, *Bonnie Plants*

Wednesday, March 10

5 PM Patio Design and Paver Installation, *Pavestone Co.*

7 PM Vegetable Gardening to Lower Your Grocery Bill, *Bonnie Plants*

Thursday, March 11

5 PM Lawn Care and Restoration, *The Scotts Company*

7 PM Eco-Friendly Composting, *The Home Depot*

Friday, March 12

5 PM Backyard BBQ Grilling with Weber Grills

7 PM Patio Design and Paver Installation, *Pavestone Co.*

Saturday, March 13

11 AM Kids Clinic

NOON Lawn Care and Restoration, *The Scotts Company*

2 PM Trees and Shrubs in YOUR Landscape, *Bell Nursery*

4 PM Container Gardening, Bell Nursery

7 PM Vegetable Gardening to Lower Your Grocery Bill, *Bonnie Plants*

Sunday, March 14

NOON Lawn Care and Restoration, *The Scotts Company*

2 PM Container Gardening, *Bell Nursery*

4 PM Vegetable Gardening to Lower Your Grocery Bill, *Bonnie Plants*

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Schedule subject to change.

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Tim Carter

Founder, AsktheBuilder.com

Now is your chance to "ask the builder" in person. Carter is a special guest speaker at this year's Show appearing Friday, March 12 at 5 pm, Saturday, March 13 at 2 pm & 6 pm, and Sunday, March 14 at 2 pm.

Tim Carter is a former Cincinnati-based custom home builder and remodeler. He is a master carpenter, master roof cutter and master plumber.

In 1993, he was selected as one of the Top 50 Remodelers in the United States by *Remodeling* magazine. The award helped him launch his self-syndicated newspaper column that ran in nearly 100 newspapers. In 1995, Carter launched his popular Web site, AsktheBuilder.com.

Carter also started producing home-improvement videos in 1998 and is now one of the most popular home-improvement partners on YouTube. He has produced hundreds of helpful videos, available on the site, showing the right way to do many tasks around your home.

Carter continues to write columns and produce videos each week. Find archived columns for free at AsktheBuilder.com. He is currently building his retirement home in New Hampshire on 90 acres of pristine forestland complete with waterfalls. ■

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"People are re-evaluating how to simplify their lives, and that includes growing food," says Peter Huttinger, Neighborhood Gardens Coordinator at the Civic Garden Center of Greater Cincinnati.

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Vegetable Gardening

from amendments to zucchini

Everything you need to know to put fresh, homegrown vegetables on your dinner table.

By Susan M. Eble • Photos by Ryan Kurtz
shot on location in Sue Trusty's Sycamore Township garden

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Raised-bed gardening is ideal to help provide adequate aeration and drainage in our predominately clay-textured soils.

Remember visits to the garden with your grandmother, picking fresh cucumbers to make pickles? If you close your eyes, can you still taste the sweet raspberries that grew in her yard?

No so long ago, plucking fresh vegetables out of a backyard garden was one of the highlights of summer. According to Peter Huttinger, Neighborhood Gardens Coordinator at the Civic Garden Center of Greater Cincinnati, those days are coming back. He has seen a surge of activity in vegetable gardening, with enrollments for the CGC's Community Gardens Development Training classes doubling this year.

"People are re-evaluating how to simplify their lives, and that includes growing food," Huttinger says. "It has to do with both the economy and a desire for healthy, safe, chemical-free food."

The rebirth of gardening is attracting people like Debbie Huff, who after a couple of years dabbling with a few tomato and basil plants is learning the joys of vegetable gardening. Last fall, her sons, Tyler, age 4, and Nicholas, 3, proudly displayed the first homegrown pumpkin from their Sycamore Township garden.

"I like the cost savings of growing vegetables from a $.50 pack of seed. Then there's the organic factor, " Huff explains. "But most of all, it's fun!"

Ready to try this at home? Here's everything you need to know:

Choose the site wisely

It sounds simple, but this crucial first step can mean the difference between success and failure. Vegetable plants need at least six hours of sun per day, so avoid areas that are shaded by buildings or trees. Without sufficient sunlight, the plants will grow spindly and won't produce well.

Good drainage is essential, too. If the potential site is waterlogged, consider installing drainage tiles or gardening in raised beds.

The site should have access to water—you don't want to lug heavy watering jugs across the yard. Just as important, your garden should be convenient to the kitchen. That way, you can effortlessly zip out and grab some fresh veggies or herbs for the dinner table.

Plan to start small and build on your success. It takes time and effort to maintain

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a large garden, so start off with a garden of less than 100 square feet. You can always expand later.

To reduce the amount of time and work required, as well as make the most of your square footage, consider intensive gardening: Instead of planting in conventional rows, plant in beds. If the seed packet says to plant your bush bean seeds "4 inches apart in rows that are 2 feet apart," plant them 4 inches apart in both directions to completely fill one section of the bed.

Intensive gardening beds are typically 4 feet wide (or less) to allow you to reach into the bed from both sides to tend the plants and harvest. Sue Trusty gardens in three beds that are each 4 feet wide by 20 feet long.

"I like this method of gardening because it gives you the most bang for your buck," Trusty says. "You get a large harvest from a small space. You never walk on the soil, so it stays nice and fluffy. There's less room for weeds to grow. When you harvest one crop, you just replant the empty space with another."

Start with the soil

Initial soil preparation is another key to successful gardening. For a conventional garden, spread 4-6 inches of compost on top of the soil and work it in with a spade or a tiller. Work the soil only when it is dry enough that it will not stick to your tools.

If you don't make your own compost, well-rotted livestock manure, mushroom compost or other soil conditioners can be purchased in bags or bulk. Apply fresh compost each spring and again in the fall. It will take a few seasons to improve the soil.

Adding soil amendments causes the prepared garden bed to be raised, or mounded, by several inches. Raised-bed gardening is ideal to help provide adequate aeration and drainage in our predominantly clay-textured soils.

Some gardeners prefer to use landscaping timbers or lumber to frame the raised bed. The height can vary from 6-24 inches tall. The taller height makes it easier for people with a bad back or trouble bending over to plant and weed the garden. The initial investment in more soil to fill this type of raised bed is somewhat offset by the increased harvest from a loose, lovely soil.

A loamy topsoil/compost mix is ideal for raised beds, planters or containers. Bagged planting mix is good for container gardening, too. Container gardeners should avoid planting into fine-textured potting soils or garden soil, which lack adequate drainage and aeration for optimum growth.

Incorporate a complete fertilizer when preparing the soil for planting. This will help the plants develop a strong root system and get growing.

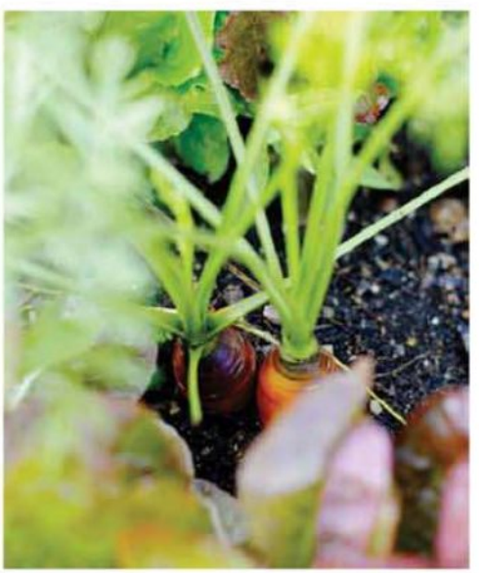
Time to plant

Most popular garden vegetables are annuals—they grow, flower and produce seed in one growing season. Peas, spinach, lettuce and greens, cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower are "cool season" annuals. They tolerate frost and grow best during the cooler weather of spring or fall. A second crop can be planted in summer for fall harvest.

"Warm season" plants perform best during the heat of the summer. Tomatoes, peppers, melons, squash and basil are examples of plants that refuse to grow in cold soil and wilt at the barest hint of frost.

It's a common mistake to plant the tender veggies during the first long warm spell, only to have them succumb to frost a week or two later. In the Cincinnati area, we use Mother's Day as the traditional planting date for frost-tender, warm-season annuals. Even so, if an extra-late frost is predicted, these tender plants should be covered.

Many vegetables can be started indoors from seed and transplanted to the garden. This allows several extra weeks of growth,



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for an earlier harvest time. You can start these transplants yourself—see directions on pages H32-H33—or purchase greenhouse-grown plants. Refer to the chart below for indoor and outdoor planting times.

What and how to plant

Part of the fun of gardening is poring through the seed catalogs or the seed packets at the nursery, trying to decide what to plant. Easy-to-grow crops include onions, peas, beets and zucchini squash. Perfect for beginning gardeners, these can all be sown directly into the garden. Tomatoes and peppers are set out as transplants.

Radishes are especially fun to grow, because they can be picked only 30 days after planting. Trusty always plants radish and carrot seeds in the same space; when the radishes are harvested, it leaves room for the slower-growing carrots to mature.

To start from seed in the garden, make a shallow trench and scatter the seeds thinly into it. Cover to a depth of twice the diameter of the seed. Use vermiculite instead of soil to cover very small seeds. This prevents crusting of the soil surface, which inhibits germination.

After planting, water the bed with a fine spray to prevent washing the seeds from their place. The surface of the bed should be kept moist with daily light watering until germination is complete. When the seeds have sprouted, they should be thinned to their final spacing. Don't neglect this step, or your plants will be thin and weak!

To transplant already started plants into the garden, remove the plants from their pots and gently loosen the roots with your fingers. Set the plants at the same level that they were growing in their original pots—except for tomato plants, which should be planted up to the first set of leaves.

Finish with a 1- to 2-inch layer of mulch to conserve moisture and discourage weeds. Be sure to place taller vegetables, such as tomatoes, pole beans and sweet corn, on the north side of the garden to keep them from shading shorter plants. If you plant corn, plant a minimum 4-by-4-foot block for adequate cross pollination.

Maintenance

Once your garden is planted, plan on spending about 30 minutes or so a week on maintenance for each 100 square feet.

Pull weeds weekly to prevent them from becoming a major problem. Water young seedlings daily, tapering off to water deeply one to two times per week. Vegetable plants need at least an inch of water per week, from a combination of rain and irrigation. Invest in a rain gauge and use it. If a week has passed without rain, it's time to get out the hose!

Apply a granular formulation fertilizer one month after planting. If you're using a liquid fertilizer, it should be applied at regular intervals according to package directions.

Container gardens will need frequent watering, especially if they are in the sun. A full container of plants may require daily watering in the heat of summer. Because of the smaller volume of soil and the constant leaching of nutrients from frequent watering, fertilizer should be applied every two weeks.

Unfortunately, critters may take a liking to your new garden. For the small garden, a wire mesh fence surrounding the garden works to discourage many small animals, such as rabbits, geese and even a hungry neighbor or two.

Proper spacing, watering, weeding and fertilizing is the best way to prevent disease and insect infestation without having to resort to harmful insecticides. If you do see evidence that insects are chewing on your plants, don't wait to fight back. Many insects can be hand-picked or blasted off with a stream of water or insecticidal soap. As a last resort, identify the insect causing the damage and choose an insecticide that will control that specific pest.

And a final maintenance task: After you harvest one crop, plant another in its place.

VEGETABLE	INDOOR PLANTING DATE	GARDEN PLANTING DATE	SPACING	TIME TO HARVEST
Beans		Late May	4 inches	60 days
Beets		April - June	3 inches	40-70 days
Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower	March	April - May	12 inches	4-5 months
Carrots		April - July	3 inches	90 days
Cucumbers	May 1	Late May	6 inches	2-3 months
Eggplants	March	Late May	12 inches	4-5+ months
Endive, Escarole	March	April - June	12 inches	2-3 months
Leaf Lettuce	March	April - July	4 inches	50-70 days
Onions	March	April	3 inches	3-4 months
Peas		Mid-March	4 inches	60 days
Peppers	March 1	Late May	12 inches	4-5 months
Pumpkins, Squash*	March 1	Late May	24 inches	4-5 months
Radishes		April - August	2 inches	30 days
Spinach		April - June	4 inches	90 days
Sweet Corn		Late May	6 inches	2-3 months
Tomatoes	March	Late May	24 inches	4-5 months
Watermelons*	May 1	Late May	24 inches	4-5 months

**Plant three pumpkin, squash or watermelon seeds in the center of one 24-inch square*

Harvest

Soon, it will be time to harvest your garden fare. This is the reward for all your hard work! Check your plants every few days to see what is ready. Amazingly, the more you pick, the more your plants will produce.

Some tips:

- Pick the outer leaves of lettuce, spinach and other greens when the plants have reached about 4 inches in height. Allow the younger, inner leaves to keep growing. Leaf lettuce can be harvested for weeks in this fashion.
- Cucumbers race with zucchini to see which can grow faster. Check both daily and gather while young.
- Bean pods should look and feel full, but should be picked while the pods are still smooth. Peas should be tasted to establish if they are sweet enough—but try not to eat the whole crop in the garden; save some for dinner! ■

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Once your garden is planted, plan on spending about 30 minutes a week on maintenance for each 100 square feet of garden space.

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starting from seed

BY SUSAN M. EBLE

SEED PACKETS

Growing transplants from seed puts the harvest time weeks sooner than with direct sowing in the garden. Plus, it's the only way to grow a particular plant variety that interests you when you can't find it offered at the local nursery. It's fun to study the seed catalogs with your family, choosing which plants to try!

Seeds are tiny, living entities, so you must store them properly to maintain viability. Once the seed packets are opened, you should label them—name, source, year of purchase—and store them in a small re-closable bag that's kept in a larger plastic container. Keep the container in a cool, dark location with low humidity, like a refrigerator.

Try it at the Show

Purchase or renew a *Cincinnati Magazine* subscription at the 2010 Home & Garden Show and receive a free packet of premium seeds and a Web coupon from Renee's Garden. Stop by Garden Booth #20 for details.

PREPARING THE SOIL

Use a commercial seed-starting mix. This is important to prevent seedling diseases; commercial mixes have been sterilized.

Large seeds and seeds of plants that resent root disturbance when transplanted are best sown into small, individual containers such as cell packs, plug trays or peat or paper pots. Larger plastic pots, or recycled yogurt or margarine tubs with holes poked in the bottom, work well for sowing multiple smaller seeds. If recycled containers are used, sterilize them by scrubbing with a mixture of one part bleach to nine parts water.

As with all potting projects, always premoisten the planting mix before filling the container. The soil mix should feel as wet as a squeezed-out sponge. Fill the container with the moistened soil and press lightly. Water again, and allow the container to drain.

PLANTING THE SEEDS

Sow small seeds directly on the soil surface. Plant larger seeds in a shallow depression. Cover the seed with vermiculite or seed-starting mix, to a depth of twice the seed's diameter. Each seed must be in firm contact with the moist soil to begin germinating, so use your fingers or the bottom of a glass to gently tamp down the surface.

Water, and cover the container with a sheet of clear plastic or one of the inexpensive greenhouse domes found at plant nurseries. If the soil surface gets dry, lift the plastic covering and mist it with water from a spray bottle. Remove the cover as soon as you see germination to allow for good air circulation.

Most seeds require temperatures of 65° to 75°F for speedy germination. If your room is cooler than that, consider purchasing a heating pad designed especially for plant use.

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STAGES OF SEEDLINGS

After germination, seedlings need bright light to avoid spindly growth. If you do not have access to a full southern exposure, consider growing the seedlings under lights. Give the container a quarter turn each day to prevent the seedlings from reaching toward the light source and developing weak, elongated stems. Also, gently brush the palm of your hand against the tops of the seedlings each day—this will encourage strong stem growth, too.

When the "true leaves" emerge—those are the first leaves following the initial pair of "seed leaves"—it's time to begin a half-strength liquid fertilizer regimen on a weekly basis.

To prevent the fungal infection often referred to as "damping-off," place a small fan near your seedlings. Keep the fan on low and direct it to blow across the containers at the soil level where air may become trapped and stagnant.

TIME TO TRANSPLANT TO A BIGGER POT

For the least shock to the young plants, transplant the seedlings into individual containers as young as your fingers can easily handle them. It's best to transplant from the sowing flat when one set of "true leaves" has developed. Move the seedlings by grasping the small leaves—do not grab the seedlings by their stems, which are easily crushed or bent.

When the roots on an individually planted seedling fill the container, it's time to move the plant up into the next-larger size pot. Choose a container that's an inch or so larger in diameter than the current pot.

READY FOR THE GARDEN

Most seedlings will be ready to plant outdoors in about six weeks. Before the seedlings can be planted outdoors, they need to be hardened off, or acclimated to direct sunlight and fluctuating temperatures. It is best to do this over a three- to five-day period by placing them outdoors in shade the first day, in direct sunlight during the morning only of the second day, then increasing their time in the sun by a few hours each day until they are vigorous enough to be transplanted.

Seedlings were prepared for the photo shoot by Sue Trusty, a garden coach, speaker and instructor in the horticulture program at the University of Cincinnati. She blogs about her Cincinnati-area garden at www.thetrustygardener.com.

Susan M. Eble is an avid gardener and garden writer, and has a master's degree in horticulture.

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MEET THE CONE-HEADS

A broad spectrum of year-round color captivates local conifer gardeners.

By ***Marnie Hayutin*** Photography by ***Daylight Photo***, shot on location at the ***Stanley M. Rowe Arboretum*** in Indian Hill

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IT takes a certain kind of person to lovingly protect an heirloom rose through a harsh winter, or amend the soil for a temperamental rhododendron, all for the reward of few sweet weeks of seeing the plant in bloom.

Those aren't conifer people.

No, conifer people will tell you they're not interested in waiting for a three-day window to run out to the garden and see their precious plants looking nice. For them, it's all about year-round color.

"Perennials are really colorful, but after a week or two the leaves turn brown and they look ugly," says Bernie Bolte, a conifer gardener from Florence, Ky. "I have color that doesn't fade in two or three weeks."

For those of us who think that "color" means green, green and green—or who think that evergreens are the "invisible" part of the landscape, growing there on their own or left behind by the last homeowner—we're about to get an education. Bolte's 50-by-150-foot mobile home lot hosts about 60 different conifers. The variety in color and textures is nothing short of astounding—from the legal-pad-yellow *Juniperus horizontalis* 'Mother Lode' that spreads like a living mulch low to the ground, to the white-tinged *Pinus parviflora* 'Tani-mano-uki', to the Kelly-green *Picea abies* 'Pusch' with its ruby-colored cones.

Of course, conifer gardeners get the temporary payoff, too—many conifers have a special season where they show off a new outfit of sorts. *Pinus sylvestris* 'Gold Coin' turns golden yellow in the winter. The new spring growth of 'Tani-mano-uki' comes out pink. Also in spring, the blue spruce cultivar *Picea pungens* 'Downey's Golden' looks like it has been painted with yellow polka dots. But

WHICH IS WHICH? Top (left to right): 1. Bald cypress needles turn red in the fall. 2. Spruce trees have single needles and the branchlets tend to be droopy. Cones hang down from the branches. 3. Pine needles are clustered together in bunches. 4. Taxus is a common foundation planting, often used in hedges. Bottom (left to right): 5. Arborvitae have short, feathery needles. 6. The signature round berries of the juniper. Needles are feathery like arborvitae but more prickly. 7. Fir needles are softer than spruce and smell like citrus when crushed. Cones grow straight up. 8. Cryptomeria (Japanese cedar) has short, spiky needles that radiate out at about 45-degree angles.

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then they still retain their primary colors to enjoy the rest of the year. Except for a few deciduous conifers that lose their needles in the fall, nothing withers and turns brown.

Conifers aren't fussy or needy like roses or rhododendrons, either. There's no weekly maintenance schedule for these plants—heck, there's barely even an annual one. If you select the right ones for your climate and plant them correctly, they pretty much take care of themselves. You might have to check for pests or trim an occasional branch to keep the walkway clear, but that's about it.

So, with no sprinkling of Epsom salts to do, and no need to run out in the middle of a spring snowstorm to cover a tender specimen, that leaves plenty of time for the real business of conifer gardening: collecting new conifers.

It's not unusual for Ron and Judy Regenhold to travel 1,000 miles over a weekend to track down a cultivar they located at a nursery in Michigan, or Pennsylvania, or New York. It may or may not fit easily into the trunk of the car. "Who needs luggage?" the gardeners joke. They suffer from a common affliction, know to conifer collectors as "Addicted Conifer Syndrome" or "Coniferitis."

For the most part, conifer collectors are after dwarf and miniature varieties. Frankly, there's something sort of enchanting about the little guys. "Some are just plain cute—you can't help but say that," notes Chris Daeger, horticulturist and manager of the Rowe Arboretum, as well as Central Regional vice president and a member of the National Board of Directors of the American Conifer Society.

But primarily, it's a practicality issue—dwarf and miniature conifers are easiest to manage if you're gardening on a typical suburban lot. Conifers are classified by growth rate. Miniatures grow an inch or less per year; dwarfs grow 1-6 inches per year; intermediates, 6-12 inches per year; and large conifers grow a foot or more per year.

"People always ask 'How big does it get?'" Daeger says. "That's the wrong question. You should be asking, 'How fast does it grow?'" That tells you how long you'll get to enjoy the plant before you have to deal with its size. If you leave it there long enough, a dwarf can still get big. A dwarf tree that grows 5 inches a year will be more than 12 feet tall in 30 years. "People think that it reaches a certain height and stops growing," Daeger adds. "If it stops growing, it's dead."

And, in 30 years, there's a big difference between a dwarf conifer that grows 2 inches a year and a dwarf that grows 6 inches a year.

(left) *Juniperus horizontalis* grows low, like a living mulch.

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CONIFER BASICS

Conifers don't require much care, but there are a few secrets for success. Here's what horticulturist Chris Daeger says you need to know.

1. Start with local winners. Conifer gardeners everywhere have been tempted by plants that are not suitable for their climate. You're welcome to try one, but consider it an annual—it's not going to last the year. Before you buy, check out plantplaces.com, a Web site in partnership with The Cincinnati Zoo, to see what's tried-and-true for our area.

2. Don't amend the soil. You want the tree to acclimate to the actual soil you have. "The plant is going to be living there a long time, and the roots are going to go out beyond that little area you happened to fix up," says Daeger, manager of the Rowe Arboretum in Indian Hill. Break up the soil before planting so the roots can spread out, but don't change the composition.

3. Instead, **layer on compost and mulch.** Make the circle of soil around the tree as large as possible so the tree doesn't have to compete with grass or other plants for nutrients. Then, add organic matter in the form of compost and mulch. You are simulating the nutrients the tree would get naturally in the forest, when leaves and sticks break down and return nutrients to the soil. "You're creating a micro-environment that's similar to or trying to duplicate what's in nature," Daeger says. Take care not to mulch too close to the trunk of the tree—the mulch will rot the trunk as it's decomposing.

4. Don't use hedge shears to trim conifers. Daeger says a more free-form, natural shape is healthier for the plant. The proper method is to use a hand trimmer to cut the longer growth, branch by branch, back into the plant. That improves air circulation and lets light get deeper into the plant. Shearing the plant straight across forces all the new growth out at the tips; that's how you get hedges with a shell of foliage but empty branches underneath. "The other thing about using hedge shears," Daeger notes, "is you create a plant object that looks like it's from a mold. And when it does start growing again, it looks like it immediately needs a haircut."

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Conifers are classified by growth rate: Miniatures grow an inch or less per year; dwarfs grow 1-6 inches per year; intermediates, 6-12 inches per year; and large conifers grow a foot or more per year.

Buying a dwarf without checking the growth rate is a typical rookie mistake. Bolte once had to move three oriental spruce trees that grew 7 feet in 10 years. "I couldn't see the front of my house anymore," he recalls.

Now, Bolte is an experienced conifer gardener. On his small lot, he limits his collection to tall skinny trees or very slow-growing ones. "I've made use of all the space I have," he says. "I'm to the point now where if I see another plant I want, I have to get rid of one first. It's just constantly changing. Every time I see a new catalog and see something I want, I have to figure out how I'm going to squeeze it in."

"Something that we have always been guilty of is buying plants for which we have no space," the Regenholds say. "We rationalize that because bad winters and summers have a way of thinning our collection, we must always be ready with a replacement, or two, or 10." And, removing plants to make room for new ones is what conifer gardeners refer to as making an "upgrade." You'll never see a conifer connoisseur wasting space with, say, a

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hedge of eight identical arborvitae.

The thrill of the chase stems from the fact that very few of the thousands of conifer cultivars can be found in an average garden store. Conifer enthusiasts say only one local garden store—Lakeview Garden Center in Fairfield—carries an impressive selection. According to owner Jim Montague, that's because for years Cincinnati gardeners not afflicted with Coniferitis had been slow to see the value in dwarfs and miniatures. They can be expensive, he notes, and some consumers would rather pay less for a bigger tree.

"But people realized that you can get something that lasts 10 years [before it has to be removed] or get something that lasts 50 years," Montague says. "I like to say they never outgrow their usefulness because of the rate at which they grow."

Eventually, avid conifer collectors usually start to grow their own new plants. "It is a natural evolution," notes Dr. Clark D. West, a conifer gardener in Harrison. "Most everyone who gets into conifers after a while has a desire to propagate them."

The most interesting cuttings to propagate come from finding what's known as a "witch's broom." Occasionally, conifers develop a small section of abnormal growth, kind of like a tree tumor. The name apparently originated in medieval times, when they thought these anomalies actually were witches' brooms left behind after a night of flying around. If caused by a genetic mutation (rather than a disease), the witch's broom can be propagated by grafting and shared with other gardeners.

Brand-new cultivars come from growing conifers from seeds. Dr. West, who focuses on growing arborvitae from seed, loves the ritual of walking the yard, inspecting the transplanted seedlings and seeing what they're evolving into.

"Every little while, I find one that really is attractive that I haven't seen before," West says. "That's where the fun is."

Intrigued? The Regenholds say searching the Internet is a great first step. "If only it were this easy when we got started!" they lament. Try the American Conifer Society's Web site, **www.conifersociety.org.** If you join the American Conifer Society, you'll get connected with gardeners all over the country who will be more than happy to show you their gardens.

"Be careful," West warns. "You might get a hobby." ■

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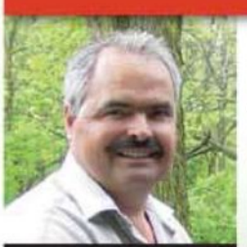

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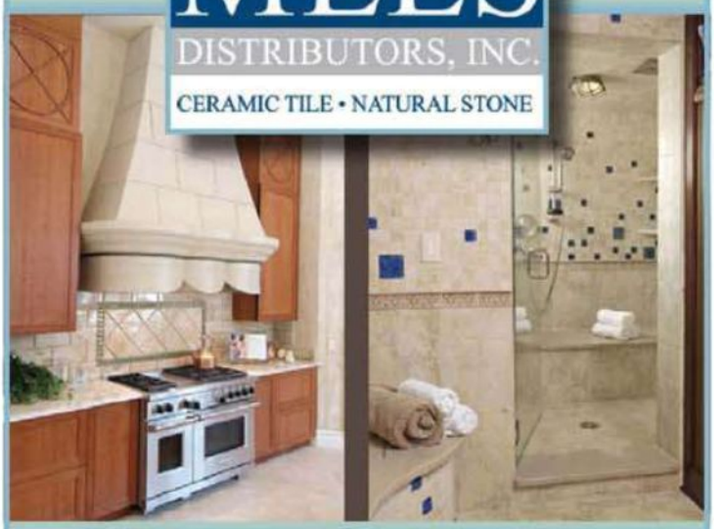

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About The Rowe Arboretum

There's no better place to start a conifer journey than The Stanley M. Rowe Arboretum in Indian Hill, which is dedicated to giving the community a place to enjoy and learn about these captivating trees.

The arboretum is the former estate of Stanley and his wife, Dorothy, nature lovers who began collecting trees and shrubs in 1926. Over the years, they reforested the property, which had previously been used for farming and pasture. Conifers were a particular favorite.

Most Cincinnatians recognize the Rowe name in association with the Cincinnati Nature Center in Milford. The joy the Rowes experienced on their own property led them to be among the founders of the nonprofit organization, which is dedicated to bringing a love of nature to the whole community.

According to the Rowe's wishes, the Arboretum opened to the public in 1987 after both Dorothy and Stanley had passed. Visitors can enjoy the collection daily, dawn to dusk. There's no admission fee, but admirers are encouraged to become members. A $25 family membership ($10 single membership) includes a free seedling propagated from the collection, an invitation to the members-only plant sale, a free plant list and the Rowe Arboretum newsletter.

The Stanley M. Rowe Arboretum
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WEB EXCLUSIVES

Find these special features online this month at www.cincinnatimagazine.com/home_garden:

- Take a virtual tour of Ron and Judy Regenhold's garden in White Oak (pictured above).
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THE 2010 HOME REMODELING HIT LIST

Experts say these are the top projects for your home this year. **By Amy Knueven**

Since the recession hit, builders have called this the "age of the remodel." First, the weak housing market encouraged would-be upgraders to stay put, then gloomy news reports persuaded people to forgo their expensive vacations.

What was a cautious homeowner to do? Many opted instead to upgrade their current homes to accommodate their growing needs and transform their own landscapes into retreats worthy of a "staycation."

Although builders say they're seeing signs of recovery, homeowners are still cautious, and we have yet to see what 2010 will bring. In the meantime, here are six home projects the experts say are the best bets for this year.

#1: THE KITCHEN REFRESHER

Whether it's an appliance facelift or a floor-to-ceiling overhaul, the kitchen remodel continues to be the project most often tackled by homeowners—and, large or small, it often proves to be the most valuable upgrade you can make to your home.

Even as the economy soured, kitchens remained the go-to project for homeowners looking to up the ante on their home's future resale value. According to Rich Maile, president of Maile Build, Remodel & Design in Crescent Springs, Ky., kitchens continue to carry their value more than most other renovation projects. "They offer the most return on investment and also provide intangible value, such as improved quality of life."

Homeowners have many options when considering their kitchen remodel, regardless of the project's scale. The smallest change—such as switching out an appliance or two—can make a big impact. And, as consumers are no longer limited to standard features and appliances, builders and remodelers are taking more requests for fancy fixtures and built-in options that offer ultimate customization.

It's no secret that people are staying in more and preparing more meals at home. To meet this demand, popular appliances, such as dual fuel ranges, which combine a gas cook top with an electric convection oven, are popping up to give a gourmet edge to culinary pros and novice chefs alike. The addition of sleek warming drawers is another common request on the latest kitchen remodel projects. They can be installed near the stove or in an island to provide stylish convenience to busy cooks.

Consumers are also sprucing up their storage areas, as well as switching out those white refrigerators for gleaming new stainless steel models, complete with elegant French doors and handy bottom-level freezers. And for the java devotee, builders are working in space for a hardwired coffee maker, similar to a built-in microwave oven. These options may seem luxurious, but many are within the reach of the average homeowner—now more than ever before. "These items are just not priced at a premium like they were maybe five years ago, so we're seeing many clients doing an upgrade," Maile notes.

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These trends represent a big turnaround in homeowners' priorities and expectations for their renovation projects. As Maile explains, "Lifestyles were different 20 or 30 years ago, when many of the homes in our area were built. The kitchens and bathrooms were nothing but functional. Now, it's about integrating form and function." In other words, the kitchen is no longer just a place to cook meals. It is a gathering place for whole families, who now need a bigger, brighter and more efficient space.

#2. THE SPA BATHROOM MAKEOVER

Homeowners who want to make a big splash without spending big bucks are turning to the master bathroom. No longer simply an accessory to the main bedroom, the master suite is taking center stage and has seen some major improvements on the renovation front.

Patrick Walch, owner and general manager of Bath Inspirations in Loveland, has seen a recent increase in full-bathroom remodeling projects.

"It's an incredible change," he says. "People have now decided to stay in their homes for eight or nine years, so they're doing practical projects."

And, because the size of the project is, by nature, smaller than a kitchen or a media room, people don't need to spend as much money to make a real impact.

But as with kitchen projects, clients working on their bathrooms don't need to make huge changes. Installing a curved shower bar makes a statement and significantly increases the width of the shower space without any demolition involved. A high-end showerhead can transform an ordinary bath with minimal effort.

Spa-like products such as these were first introduced to consumers at luxury hotels and resorts. Many people returned home and saw spa potential in their own bathrooms. "They come back and they've been in a rain shower. They've had heavy glass doors and a nice warm tile look," Walch explains. "People are going back to that spa feel in full force."

Heated tile is another luxury feature that's going mainstream. This once top-tier project is now a common addition, as consumers are recognizing its value and simplicity. Builders install a mat under the tile adhesive, which is then controlled by an electric system, generally operated with a standard circuit. Most systems have programmable thermostats that allow people to warm the tile automatically at certain times

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of the day, which also helps ensure energy efficiency. As an added bonus, water on the floor evaporates more quickly, as the overall temperature in the room increases. "You typically won't see mold and mildew in areas where a heated floor system is placed," Walch says.

#3: THE EMPTY-NESTER UPGRADE

The youngest child has finally moved out, and suddenly parents have more space than they know what to do with. But despite the difference in lifestyle, many hesitate to find smaller homes since they expect to play host to children and grandchildren for years to come.

The solution? Make changes to the home that will allow you to enjoy the best of both worlds.

According to Walch, many people make their first changes in the master bathroom. They've done the hard work of putting the kids through college, so they're interested in creating an environment that is fresh, functional and maybe even a bit indulgent.

Those spa features are popular: heated floors, rain showerheads and luxury tile. So are maintenance-free products such as quartz countertops, which unlike granite never need to be sealed. But with this demographic, future accessibility is also a consideration. "We add benches, seats, decorative grab bars," Walch notes. People want a beautiful space to enjoy, and these additions can be aesthetically pleasing as well as functional.

Other experts note that the guest bathroom often gets a little sprucing up, too, since what was once a little-used powder room will now primarily serve visiting grandchildren. Because of the room's heavier traffic, it might be time now for a shower replacement, durable cabinetry and new tile.

Another empty-nester modification: the water heater. Couples in retirement make fewer demands on their water supply, and so have less need for the standard multi-gallon water heater. They may even be spending months at a time away from the house to visit family or vacation for the winter.

TimberTech

Rather than pay to heat water they won't use (or worry about switching the tank heater to "vacation"), some clients are opting for tankless water heaters, which do not heat water when it's not being used. These products are a fraction of the size of a standard tank heater, and can even be installed in a storage area on the second floor, rather than in the basement. The initial purchase price of a tankless water heater may be higher,

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but consumers will see a drop in their overall energy costs. And you never run out of hot water.

#4: BEAUTIFIED BASEMENTS

The easiest home addition is right under your feet. A basement remodel allows you to convert unused square footage to actual living space for far less than you'd shell out to build an addition.

This is especially true in today's economy, when materials and labor for such a large project will be at their cheapest. "Prices have come down to where they're more competitive," says Todd Walters, general manager of Pendery Construction in Loveland. He says clients can expect to spend $20-$25 per square foot and up for a basement remodel. Compared to the $100 or more per square foot it would cost you to add on, this gives the basement remodel project true bang-for-your-buck status.

For starters, remove the drop ceiling and drywall everything to create a clean, uniform look. Be sure to add a bathroom, Walters advises, even if it's just a half bath with a vanity and toilet. These changes can set the stage for your basement to become a new media room, play room, guest room or home office. To create a room for entertaining, clients often add a wet bar area with a sink and counter, which makes the space perfect for casual gatherings.

#5: THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The unfortunate scene has played itself out countless times: A hopeful buyer is delighted by a gorgeous home but then enters the backyard only to be disappointed by a lackluster patio, scruffy landscaping, a ramshackle old shed or a rickety privacy fence. This situation is easily avoided if homeowners assess their yard's needs early on and make specific upgrades that can be enjoyed year after year.

Like a finished basement, an outdoor project is about adding beautiful living space to your home. The many available options for these projects will truly set your lot apart from the neighbors—and in a housing market that has seen home values plummet, adding that extra wow-factor to your house's curb appeal can be vital to a successful resale.

Additionally, backyard beautification projects simply make your home more livable, which is becoming more and more important to those homeowners who plan to wait out the market. Steve Kelly, president of Kelly Bros. Home & Design Center in Covington and Blue Ash, suggests that people have begun to embrace their inner homebody: "They're realizing that staying home isn't so bad and that they can save money by doing it, so they decide that they want to fix up what they have and enjoy it instead of moving on." Popular projects include decks, outdoor kitchens, built-in grills and fireplaces, all of which create an entire area of your home dedicated exclusively to leisure and entertainment.

Options for an outdoor upgrade are endless, but adding a beautiful deck is a great place to start. One nice product for this project is composite decking, which requires less care than traditional materials. In the past, homeowners have been required to pressure wash and seal their decks regularly to prevent warping and staining. But there have been great strides in the types of materials available. Kelly recommends TimberTech, an engineered composite decking product with PVC that provides low-maintenance protection from wear, mildew, scratches and stains.

#6: ECO IMPROVEMENTS

There's never been a better time to improve the eco-friendly profile of your home. Don't

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Kelly Bros. Home & Design Center

miss out on the valuable federal tax credits that are still available for many projects.

Several products designed to improve energy efficiency, such as small wind turbines, solar and fuel cell systems and geothermal heat pumps are eligible for a 30 percent federal tax credit of material and installation costs, with no upper dollar limit. New and existing homes qualify for the credit, which is valid through December 2016. Many projects, such as replacing windows, doors and skylights, qualify for a credit of up to $1,500 through 2010.

The best way to take advantage of tax credits is to buy smart. Look for models that have been rated by the government as energy efficient according to the ENERGY STAR program. But remember, not all ENERGY STAR-rated products are eligible for tax credits.

Regardless of their tax credit eligibility, most eco-friendly improvements pay dividends for homeowners. For example, a simple and relatively inexpensive project like upgrading your insulation can make a huge difference in utility costs, and will help you reduce your overall energy use. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that homeowners who properly insulate their homes can save 20 percent on heating and cooling costs.

"Also, insulation is relatively inexpensive," Maile explains, "so certainly if your house is under-insulated or inefficient, get that taken care of now, since it's a low-hanging fruit."

Look for advancements in insulation products, including a synthetic expanding foam material that provides far better insulation from the elements than standard fiberglass. "It's substantially more expensive up front," Maile notes, "but the motivation is that you'll drastically reduce your energy costs and enjoy that comfort." ■

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COLOR CHARTING

The rules have changed…here's what you need to know now.

by Coleen Armstrong

The woman was remodeling her home's entire first floor. It was one of those wonderful open spaces, where the kitchen, dining room and family room were all visible from several angles. She'd elected to paint each a different gradient of sage green, figuring that was the best way to achieve a cohesive flow. But something was wrong; she wasn't feeling especially excited about the project.

Cincinnati color consultant Sandy Jenkins-Smith surveyed the area and then nodded. "Green is certainly a workable option," she agreed. "But you can also go with three different colors if that's what you'd prefer."

"I can?" The woman's eyes widened.

Jenkins-Smith explained the technique of combining complementary choices and then tying rooms together with similar accents. The pair sat down and began shuffling paint strips. After a couple of hours the woman finally selected terra cotta for her dining room, Tuscan gold for her family room and cornflower blue for her kitchen—a mix that might have sounded garish, had Jenkins-Smith not pointed out a color wheel showing the blue family lying directly opposite the orange-gold family.

The woman was delighted with the result.

"She had a lot of windows, so the huge amount of natural light just made those colors pop," Jenkins-Smith recalls. "But not every blue or gold would have worked. We had to take into account furniture, cabinetry and countertops. Black granite counters, we decided, would provide the ideal anchor."

And that's where color selections tend to get complicated. Too many homeowners assume that because designers these days are brushing aside so many timeworn mandates, absolutely anything goes. Not so. Would you paint a nursery fire-engine red? Only if you wanted an agitated infant, since red stimulates and energizes the senses. A red dining room, on the other hand, can be ideal for entertaining, since it tends to increase people's appetites and their urges to socialize.

"Never choose a color just because you like it," says color expert Sandy Jenkins-Smith. "And never choose a color in isolation." Lighting, windows, artwork, rugs, furniture and the room's function must all be considered.

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the elements

One thing that hasn't changed is that painting your walls is still the quickest and least expensive way to transform any room. One thing that *has* changed is that builders are finally getting the message—homebuyers want color choices that go far beyond vanilla yogurt.

"They can't get away with offering just white or beige anymore," laughs Ruthanne Hanlon, national color and design manager with PPG Porter Paints. "Color is what makes a house a home, and it's a relatively easy way to offer one more customer upgrade. It's fast becoming part of the selection process, in fact, right along with carpeting and tile."

But fanning a deck that holds hundreds of paint strips, each offering seven different shades of periwinkle or persimmon, can be paralyzing. So let's explore some current thinking among color professionals and then present some reassuring guidelines.

Any color can be a neutral. This philosophy has seen a slow, gradual evolvement. Once there was ivory, tan, buff or gray. Then we morphed into straw, khaki and peach sorbet. Now, if you think rightfully in terms of a creating a backdrop that enhances rather than eclipses your art and furnishings, you can choose anything from peacock to geranium to tangerine.

Different demographics select colors differently. Baby boomers, for example, those between ages 46 and 64, will find canary yellow walls less appealing than will their children and grandchildren, who are members of Generations X and Y. People who grew up with soothing, conservative wall colors are more likely to think of using mint or amber as throwing caution to the wind. People who are accustomed to neon orange and acid green in cars, computers and wireless phones won't be as timid when it's time to pick a kitchen's palette.

Trends that used to last 10 years now hang around for closer to three to five. Shorter shelf lives are dictated partly by consumers' brief attention spans and partly by the fashion designers now storming the interior marketplace who are accustomed to introducing new collections every six months. Will this change in the wake of the recession? Hanlon says yes: "In this economy we're seeing trends last longer."

Selecting one of those "new" neutrals with a cool name like saffron, cinnabar or fern requires careful planning. "Never choose a color just because you like it," Jenkins-Smith cautions. "And never choose a color in isolation." Your favorite indigo, for example, could be a gloomy disaster against your deep caramel sofa and chairs. Consider lighting, windows, wall hangings, rugs and accessories—along with your room's function. A dark dining room enhanced by dimmed sconces and flattering candlelight can be romantic. A dark kitchen when grabbing a midnight snack can be scary.

Your wall color shouldn't become the only thing that people notice. Unless you're an 8-year-old girl, bubble-gum pink will only work as a complement, not a focal point. Many lavenders, oranges and greens fortunately have muting, dusky undercurrents. "Any time you introduce some gray

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or brown," Hanlon says, "you instantly tone that color down and make it easier to work with."

Also, if your possessions are refined, such as authentic antiques that happen to be colorful (think country French armoires in lime, rose or forsythia), you'll need to be extra careful to veer toward non-upstaging backdrops.

Don't be an old poke; push past those demographics. Baby boomers in particular resent any implication that they've grown stale or out-of-touch, and nothing hits home like their homes. You may not want to paint a master bedroom cobalt, as your 30-year-old son-in-law just did—but who says you can't add some cobalt-and-celery pillows to jazz up that dusty aqua? Staying current is more often about switching out accessories than starting from scratch anyway.

Don't let your ceilings grow up to be bland. Once you begin to incorporate some serious color into your life, white ceilings will look as unwelcome as cracks in drywall. Consider painting them (and perhaps mold-

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Remember avocado with harvest gold? Dusty rose with pewter? Hunter green with bordeaux? Bet you can even name the decades during which those color combos were all the rage. So what happened; why did they disappear?

People grew bored, that's what. They began to crave something fresher. Unfortunately, designers can't invent new colors. They can only reinvent them through gradients, undertones and unexpected pairings.

So what are we seeing more of? Lemongrass with aqua. Nettle with bourbon. Jute with praline. Note that the names are as compelling as the colors themselves. Consumers are more likely to choose a shade called ecru or even burlap than one called linen; it sounds trendier.

What are we beginning to see less of? Chocolate brown with powder blue. Once a color duo goes mainstream, it's no longer adventurous, and designers are quick to move on. But fashion, as we all know, is cyclical, and most colors eventually make a comeback with some odd spin or another. Cincinnati color consultant Sandy Jenkins-Smith can cite only one that she hasn't seen homeowners adopt in a very long time: mustard.

"You can do a lot with the yellow family and never touch that shade," she says.

If and when it does return, however, it won't even resemble what once sat inside your grandmother's fridge. It will likely contain brown flecks and be renamed...Dijon.

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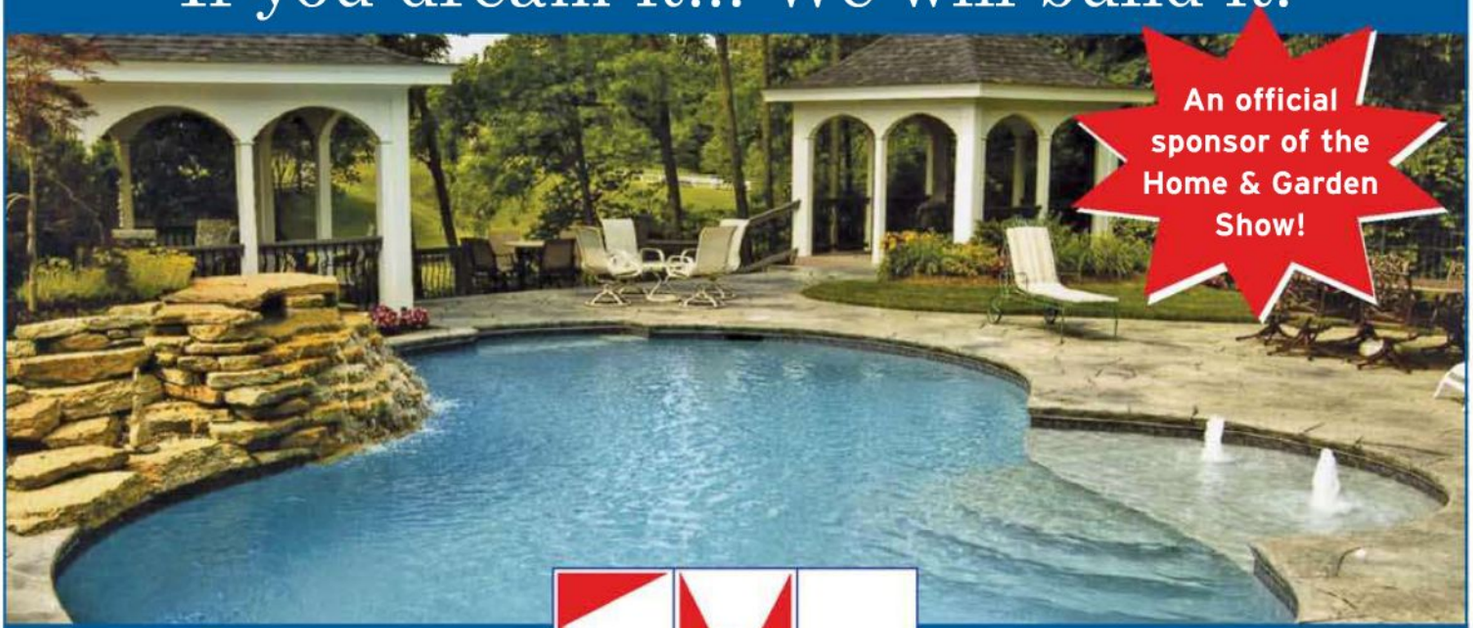

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DESIGNERS, WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM

Let's say you fell in love eight years ago with a slab of granite called blue lightning. You painted your kitchen walls daffodil, installed pearl cabinetry with stainless appliances—and wound up with a heart-stoppingly beautiful result.

Which you still love.

But now you're seeing pictorials that feature bright, brazen walls with more neutral countertops and flooring. Is your kitchen dated? Must you rip it apart and start over?

Of course not. That kind of distress, not to mention budgetary suicide, is unnecessary. Instead, try flipping the sequence. Rather than going more outrageous on your walls, go softer, with a color like pale smoke or coffee kiss. Buy pillows for a window seat in a fawn, gray and pearl texture. Switch out those golden honey canisters, and replace them with unadorned stainless steel.

Blue lightning granite suddenly becomes the single jazzy enhancement to those subtler shades, and your kitchen looks as if it were remodeled—yesterday.

"That's why paint has become so popular," says Ruthanne Hanlon, national color and design manager with PPG Porter Paints. "You may not be able to afford new furnishings or cabinets or counters. But you can always change a wall color to shake up your space."

ings, doors and woodwork as well) three to four shades lighter than your walls. Choosing is a breeze; just look up or down the paint strip. Once the trim has been lightly colorized, everything else in the room will suddenly glow.

Hire a professional painter. Everyone's thinking in terms of DIY nowadays, but painting is no job for amateurs. "What should be an afternoon project can turn into days," Hanlon says. "By the time you tear up a room, move furniture, lay down drop cloths, set up the ladder and start mixing, your house is a mess. It's so stressful, and so worth the expense of calling a contractor." Also, you'll skip the hassle of realizing that visible drips and streaks are not supposed to be a part of your finished project.

And finally—**never say never.** The very color you think you loathe could become your next great love affair. Yes, just about the time you've decided that you'd be insane to consider painting your living room lavender, you stumble across a heavenly shade called summer lilac—which some-

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how makes your raw silk sofa look as if it has been freshly dry-cleaned. Remember, the eye evolves. What looked sensational six years ago suddenly seems tired and dated. What once looked jarring now feels hip and happening.

Ruthanne Hanlon still shakes her head when she recalls the client who once requested a custom color called bronze green. "I thought it was hideous," Hanlon says. "Even the guys in the paint store were snickering."

But a couple of months later the client called again, this time seeking input on selecting window treatments for her bedroom. Hanlon entered the front hallway, then the living room—and her jaw fell. The walls were indeed bronze green, but with fabrics and accessories all firmly in place, everything was brought to vibrant life. "It was one of the most stunning backdrop colors I'd ever seen," she exclaims. "It just took my breath away."

The lesson? "I told myself then and there that I would never make fun of any color choice again." ■

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EXTERIOR DESIGN

To create the perfect new backyard space, interior designer Diane Kidd simply brought her bag of interior design tricks outside.

By Judi Ketteler • Photography by Gary Kessler

"Our backyard was not a whole lot of anything," says Union, Kentucky-based interior designer Diane Kidd. A stop on the 1993 Homefest tour, the Kidds' Triple Crown home had nice landscaping in the front, which had been well-maintained through the years. And though Kidd had added a cottage-style perennial garden in the back, the rear yard had never really lived up to its potential.

So when the deck needed to be replaced, Kidd saw an opportunity to redo the entire backyard space. "It was just a typical redwood deck," Kidd says. Plus, there was no way to easily access the backyard from the driveway. Visitors had to file through the kitchen and out onto the small, one-level deck, so when the Kidds entertained (as they frequently did) the deck quickly became a juggernaut.

"On any given weekend, it's not unusual for us to invite 15-30 people over—mostly people from our neighborhood that we're very friendly with," Kidd says. Plus, her son had recently gotten engaged and she wanted to throw a big outdoor engagement party for the couple. "We saw this as an opportunity to enlarge the deck and make something we would really enjoy."

In addition to reconfiguring the deck, Kidd also worked to create various outdoor rooms—more conducive for entertaining and

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garden design

A pergola adds a "roof" to an outdoor room, creating definition and making the space more relaxing.

getting the most from the garden.

To accomplish the task, Kidd drew on five interior design principles to create her backyard space:

1. KNOW WHAT YOU NEED

"As I would with any client, I sat down with my husband, Tim, and talked about how we had used the deck and yard in the past, and how we would like to use it now," Kidd says. Together, they thought through the problems they'd had with the space and made a wish list of what they really wanted.

Things that made the cut: a mini outdoor kitchen with a large grill and fridge, cabinets for storage, countertops for serving a buffet, plenty of space for dining, a flat screen TV, a hot tub, and better access to the yard from the driveway. Their needs dictated the space in many respects. For example, they realized that the deck needed to be multilevel to accommodate everything they wanted. Therefore, they needed to change the footprint of the existing deck.

Top Tip: *Prioritize your needs over conventional design wisdom. The Kidds both suffer from bad arthritis and wanted a hot tub. Even though they knew it would make more sense from a design standpoint to locate it on the lower level (so it would be out of the way of the main entertaining space), they were thinking ahead to what they would need in the future—and climbing up and down steps was not it. So they placed the hot tub on the main level, but built a pergola above it to give it its own niche space.*

2. UNDERSTAND THE FLOW OF TRAFFIC

Once you know how you want to use your space, you can start to think through how your guests will access and move through it. For the Kidds, it made sense to place the outdoor kitchen off the main level of the house, since the indoor kitchen walks right out onto the deck. They wanted to be able to have space to cook, without being in the

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way of the guests. At the same time, they also wanted to feel like they were part of the party while they were cooking food—which is why the cooking level is separate, but just a few steps from the main level.

Also, they wanted guests to have options about how to access the space and walk around in it, so they added a path from the driveway to the back. They placed two large planted urns on either side, so visitors are immediately drawn to it from the driveway. The deck also has a split staircase, so guests can more easily filter down into the patio and yard, and they have multiple options once at the bottom.

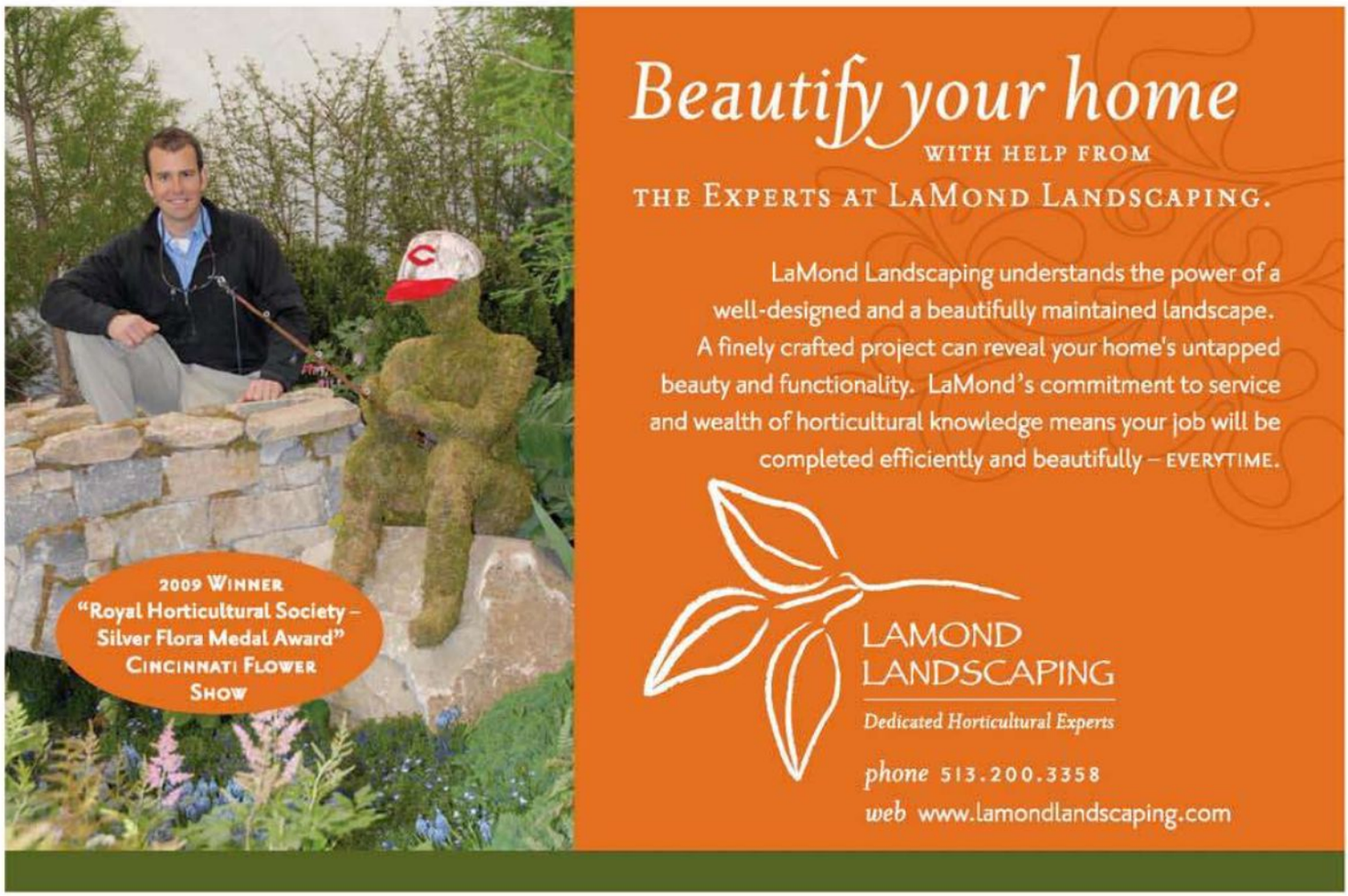
Top Tip: *Create interesting pathways that take visitors somewhere. Paths can be very simple—a few stepping stones or a mulched walkway—but they keep people circulating through the space. Be careful of locating amenities (like a buffet table) in a corner where people can't easily move in and out.*

Include interesting pathways, which keep people circulating through the garden.

3. COORDINATE YOUR COLORS

Kidd took her color cues from her kitchen, since the deck was basically an extension of that. "My kitchen is chocolate brown, coral and spring green, so I tried to coordinate my outdoor space with this," she says. Not only did she look for outdoor furniture and accessories that complemented her interior, she also considered her plant material carefully. Instead of planting one of everything (which is always the temptation at the garden center!), she kept her plant material restrained, and looked for plantings to accent those colors.

Then, she decided to do a burst of color on the lower level, incorporating lots of pinks and purples with 'Knock-out' roses,



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garden design

petunias and butterfly bushes. "When you give each garden a theme color, it has more impact and makes it more interesting to look at," she says.

Top Tip: *Group plantings by shared needs. No matter how much you love that sun perennial, it's never going to be completely happy in the shade, and vice versa. Always factor in exposure when planning your beds. The same goes for watering needs: Keep together low-maintenance plantings that don't need much water—butterfly bush, Russian sage and lavender—away from thirstier plantings, like hydrangeas and azaleas.*

4. CREATE INDIVIDUAL ROOMS

Treat your exterior like your interior, Kidd says. Creating "rooms" outside gives each

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little space a chance to shine, while still feeling cohesive. On the main level of the deck, the Kidds have essentially created a large living room, divided into little conversation areas. On the patio level, they made use of an existing pergola to create another cozy room, with a comfortable porch swing—great for an intimate conversation. The cottage garden along the fence, full of black-eyed Susans, hibiscus, Russian sage and sedum feels like another room, with a sunny, bright personality. "It's how I work out my stress—furiously digging in the soil," Kidd says. By contrast, the shade garden—accessed by a stone path—is a cooler, quieter space for meandering and taking a break; large limestone boulders and an antique bench offering plenty of seating choices.

Top Tip: *Try adding a roof to one of your outdoor rooms. "Having a cover over your head is more conducive to relaxation," Kidd says. The pergolas over the hot tub and the porch swing add warmth and hominess—and provide a little bit of shade. A pergola can be a great DIY project. It's lovely over a dining table or an outdoor sofa and chairs: Plant it with trailers such as clematis, climbing roses and wisteria, and it becomes a real focal point.*

5. DON'T FORGET THE DETAILS

The Kidds took everything into account, including music and lighting. Music had always been an integral part of entertaining for the Kidds, and they wanted to make sure their new space was wired for tunes. They put speakers in planters so that the sound would be directed down to the floor; that way, it sounds as if the music is below, like background noise (versus blaring loudly)—which is much more conducive for conversation. They also placed low-voltage lighting up in trees, along with uplighting. "Indirect lighting is the key; you don't want your light to glare," Kidd says.

Top Tip: *Good lighting is essential for evening entertaining, so instead of making it an afterthought, draw it into your plans as you go. One way to approach it: Create various conversation areas within your outdoor space (places for 4–6 people to sit), and give each its own lighting plan.* ■

Give each garden space a chance to shine as its own "room." Pergolas, walkways, decks and stonework all help define each space.

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Bill Weber, president and owner
AE Door & Window Co.

I am redoing my basement. It's going to be a fun, family media place in the style of a Scottish pub. There will be hints of stone and arches. A coffered ceiling and iron balustrades will give it the Old World look. Of course, it will have all the modern conveniences: an ice machine, dishwasher, sconce lighting, an office, plasma TV, everything.

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—Compiled by Andrea Bosco, Kersta Carlson and Sue Goldberg

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continued from page 85

for any of that. With no immediate family of his own, he apportions much of his leisure to trips to other cities to watch his alumni perform. His work is his life.

7. A HEALTHY ATTITUDE, *the capacity for psychological adjustment. There are some really horrible people in the business, and you're going to have to work with them without becoming one. Don't add yourself to the list of alcoholics, damaged people, dope fiends, and all the rest.*

On a Monday evening late in October, the cast of *Hair* is rehearsing Act One. Twenty-eight young and shapely bodies, some in pairs and some singly, move in and out of a circle, pieces in a kaleidoscope, now apart, now back together.

Berg selected *Hair,* the groundbreaking 1968 musical, expressly for the musical theater program's 40th anniversary celebration. He liked that it is a "concept musical"—less about plot than about ideas. And he liked that it would showcase his students' singing, dancing, and acting talents with lots of musical numbers.

Goateed, heavy-set, and not tall, Berg stands almost expressionless in front of the stage, watching. The song is "Donna," one of the show's big production numbers. Ever so faintly, he nods his head and taps his feet (without actually lifting them) in time to the music. He is in a cream yellow shirt and brown pants, with a cell phone at his side. Nearby are the only other full-time faculty members of the musical theater department: Lala, the choreographer, and Roger Grodsky, the musical director, coach, and conductor. While each has a vital role in determining how *Hair* will evolve, Berg's is the last word.

"You are slowing up when you start singing," he says to one of the lead dancers when the number pauses. "We cannot have it." And to another, in a trio of tappers: "You're doing your lead twirl different from the others."

Mostly, though, he watches, occasionally scratching notes on a yellow legal pad. Melvin Logan, a junior who is playing Ron, sings the score's first notes: *When the moon is in the seventh house*... Berg is not happy with Logan's inflection, and he stops him and utters one word. "Again."

Logan runs through it twice more, concluding with the famous line, "...and peace will guide the planet." The third time, Berg says, "That was exactly right."

To one of the dancers: "Aleysha, you're still doing this—" and he imitates an extraneous gesture.

"I'm sorry. I'll never do it again," she says.

To another, whose focus has drifted: "Natasha, please pay attention."

Brandon Ynez, who plays Claude, one of the principals, is asked to sing one of his lines over. "Make it a little more gospel rock," Berg instructs. "You've got to raise the roof on this one."

Then: "Tenors, you're not making much of a sound." Citing the "Manchester, England" number, he says: "I need to see a little more animation." When he gets it, he tells the cast: "That was correct. Will you remember?"

If you talk with faculty and students about Berg's techniques, invariably they remark on his attention to detail and his ability to coax extraordinary things out of his performers. His staging is almost painterly—"He has a very good eye for stage pictures," says Lala—and exceedingly precise. "The stage managers can draw road maps for blocking weeks before opening," says CCM faculty member James Gage, who has designed the lighting for more than 20 of Berg's productions. It's an obsession that serves a larger purpose, Gage says. "He stages the entire production, every little heartbeat in the show, so the actor can really deliver a message to the audience. His expertise at actor placement and emotional and spiritual impact is without question one of the very best."

All that is in evidence at the *Hair* rehearsal, along with this fact: He is a teacher and these are his students, and he is preparing them not just for one production, but for a lifetime of challenging work in a grueling field.

Berg asks them to repeat the "Aquarius" number, then abruptly waves a hand to shut them down: "That was horrible. Why are you making so little sound after 'harmony and understanding'?"

The next time a full, rich sound pours forth. "That was a whole different number," he says. "So what did you do that was different?"

6. COMMITMENT / THE WILL *to succeed. We're halfway through the list, and we haven't talked about talent yet. How long are you willing to give yourself—to live in a garret, drive a cab, bartend?*

Berg can be intimidating. He wants students to know that the entertainment business is unforgiving, that there are 55,000 Equity members who call themselves actors but are in reality nannies, store clerks, cabbies, and servers. If he is hard on his charges, it's because the world will be no less so. "They need to understand that just because Ma*ma* and Grandma*ma*," he says, emphasizing the last syllable in each, "think they're fabulous, it doesn't matter. The difference between a B+ and an A is *huge*." The intonation leaves no doubt as to which has a chance in the real world.

"It's not just about training and skills, but about life," he continues. "About dealing with a difficult profession where you get rejected 99 percent of the time. The first thing I say is 'Give up the need for praise'—because it's so easily given."

Does he ever give praise? "When it's merited."

He concludes: "How long should you give yourself? As long as it takes. But that may not be realistic for you."

5. CONTACTS. *You cannot make it on your own. The only way to do it is to network. Who are your contacts? Directors? Choreographers? Agents? Other actors? In a word: Everyone.*

Joey DeBenedetto, a student in Audition Techniques, says Berg is "a scary in-

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dividual, but he knows so much that we love him." Berg genuinely believes that anyone can act, and act well; that people are not, as DeBenedetto says, "graced by the acting fairy."

"Acting is about being a believable human being onstage," says DeBenedetto. "Aubrey knows how to work with each individual and pull out true and honest emotions. And in his class, we develop the skills to bring out those emotions over and over again, each and every time." Instead of conveying a sense that some students "have it" and others don't, "Aubrey allows his class to be a safe place to find yourself as an artist," he says.

"He does an unbelievable job of demystifying what we're doing," says Joe Moeller, who plays Berger, another of the principals in *Hair*. Moeller sees Berg as something of a theatrical guru. "We feel each [performer] can really rise to the occasion because of the things he teaches us."

Disingenuously, perhaps, Berg professes "no idea" as to whether students like him. "If I wanted them to like me, wouldn't that be like asking them for praise?" he asks. But he allows me to read some of the note cards his cast members sent him in the wake of their *Hair* experience. His students call him "Bubba"—the old nickname followed him here—and their appreciation is effusive.

"Bubba," begins one, "I have never felt so creatively free and inspired by the art form before. What you've given me in class (regarding theater as well as my life) is a gift and I will never forget it."

"Bubba," Lexie Dorsett, who played the female lead in *Hair*, writes. "I cannot even begin to express how truly special and amazing this whole week was for me. Thank you so much for trusting me with the role of Sheila. I cannot tell you how grateful I am for the opportunity. *Hair* was by far the most satisfying theatrical experience of my life."

Berg's conclusion: "They like me when I cast them and hate me when I don't," he says. "I don't think liking me needs to come into it. We're on a journey together—like the Marines. The goal is

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to make them the best they can be."

4. TRAINING/EXPERIENCE. *For some people, it's easy to get a first job. For* Rent *they wanted untrained voices, so they took kids off the street. But you've got to sustain it. CCM will open doors for you. People that you'll meet will have expectations. Take advantage of it.*

To pick his troops, Berg spends much of the winter watching auditions in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Cincinnati. The schedule, occurring mostly on weekends, is grueling, often lasting from morning until late at night. What he's looking for is not just the fabled "triple threat"—a high school student with the ability to sing, dance, and act in equal measure—but one who can be integrated into the program seamlessly. By that he means, "Sing while you act, act while you sing, and dance when the spirit moves you." What's unique about CCM training is this integration of the components, he says. "I can't say we do it better than others, but we do it really well."

With academic training for musical theater relatively rare, CCM's major rivals for talent are Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and the University of Michigan. The edge those schools have, according to Berg and Finney, is not the quality of their programs but their greater ability to grant scholarships. For that reason, Berg does not always get everyone he wants. But he gets a lot of them, and their gifts are magnificent. Typically, he says, they represent students from the "arts equivalent of a good athletic program." Like an athlete who has been preparing his or her entire life, Berg's picks have been going to voice and dance lessons since they were very young. Says lighting designer Jim Gage, "He has the best kids in North America."

For some years, Berg—along with Finney and CCM—has sought greater diversity in the composition of their classes. In the musical theater program, students of color are uncommon (some current and recent exceptions: Melvin Logan and Brandon Ynez, who had lead

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roles in *Hair;* and Tony Award–winner Karen Olivo). When Kevin McCollum, a 1984 CCM graduate and New York producer, was brought in to teach a master class last fall, he asked the students if they'd done *Ragtime*. The students told him no; they don't have enough black performers to stage it.

Berg is sensitive on this point. "The make-up of our class is as diverse as any other in the school, or more so," he says. "We certainly would like more African-Americans and Hispanics, and we've accepted many." But that's where CCM *is* less competitive, explains Terrell Finney. "We don't have adequate scholarship money to secure them," he says.

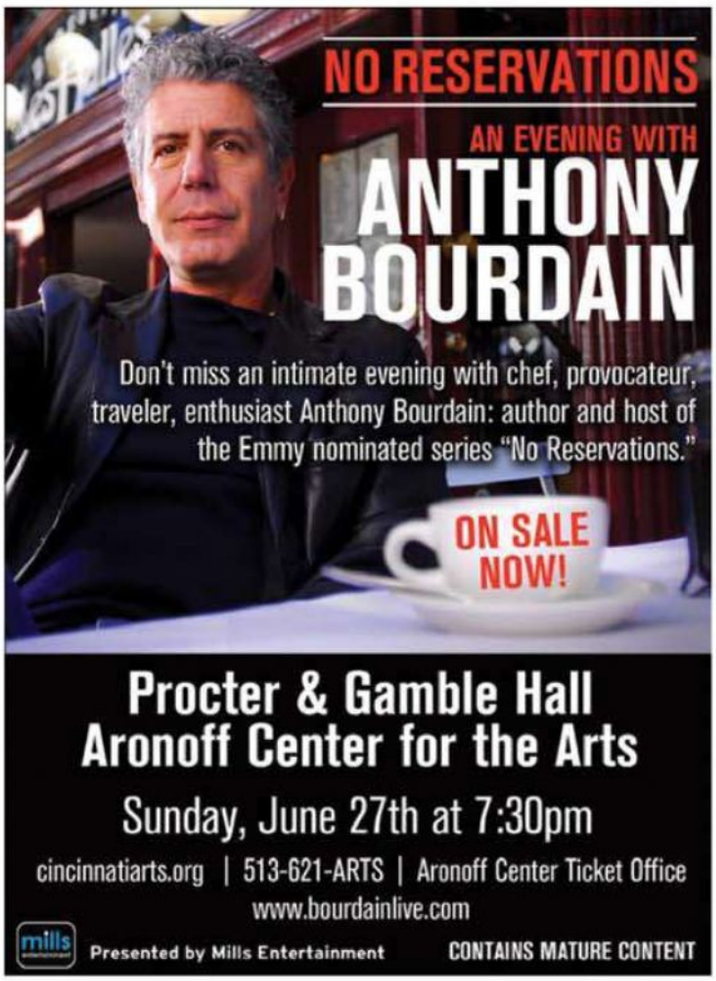
Although a total of 20 to 25 students are sought for each freshman class, attrition grinds them down. This year, 13 seniors survive. What happens? Some find that what was fun in high school is less so when you're playing for keeps. Some fall behind academically, or for disciplinary reasons, or occasionally, receive offers that tempt them to leave before graduating. And because it's a conservatory, some are dismissed because, in the opinion of the faculty, their talent doesn't measure up. The school holds performance examinations, or "boards," generally twice a year. These are song and dance performances in front of the faculty, who determine whether the students are making adequate progress. "Students can be dismissed if they aren't reaching the standards sought by the faculty," Finney says.

Two years ago, Berg made the case that because the caliber of the students is so high, and because anyone can have a bad day, no one should be dismissed on the basis of one bad board. "Now it's an overall summation of boards, performance programs, and classroom work," says Finney.

"If they flunk three boards, they can't graduate," Berg adds. "Losing three or four kids out of each class is not very many when you look at how many start in liberal arts and then graduate. I think our graduation rate is about correct. And remember: Our program is a microcosm of the profession."

***3. YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIKE THIS** one: Looks/physical appearance. Yep, they count openly. You have to look good, and if you don't, you play character roles. And if you do that, you must look really eccentric. Nathan Lane. John Belushi. Right now, men, buff is in. Get you to the gym.*

Hair opened in early November to a sold-out crowd that gave it a standing ovation. Berg's direction did not disappoint. The legendary songs sounded fresh, the dancing was dazzling, and the set was an eye-stopper. Berg took special care with the ending, ensuring that the poignant death of Claude, and his return from war in a coffin, had a searing pathos. The performance, which was preceded by large-screen stills from the '60s—Woodstock, peace marches, Vietnam battle im-



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ages, women's lib rallies—reflected well the alienation and isolation of the young people who defined that age. This, too, Berg secured by immersing his troupe in videos of the time before they ever sang a note.

Still, *Cincinnati Enquirer* critic Jackie Demaline expressed some reservations (the high energy had a "sanitized" feel, she wrote; and one of the principals sang "without ever pulling me in"), and some in the crowd with theater backgrounds felt the production was too long. Berg, who doesn't read reviews ("What's the point?" he asks), took offense when his students reported what they'd read. He said Demaline "trashed it"—not only overstating her objections, but missing the many things that she praised. If he sounds thin-skinned, he demurs: "I wouldn't have survived this long if I were thin-skinned."

2. A DEFINABLE PERSONALITY. *You better have one. Stars have personality onstage. You love them, you are seduced by them. Think of a star. Do you want to go to bed with her? Him? That's sex appeal. If you want to be a leading man or woman, you have to exude it. It's that simple.*

On the Sunday after *Hair* closed, CCM offered an afternoon of cabaret to celebrate "40 years of musical theater excellence." To secure the professional polish he adores, Berg invited nine distinguished CCM graduates to perform, and he was ebullient as he introduced them. When Gina Valentine and Jessica Hendy belted out a torchy combo that brought cheers from the packed house, Berg deadpanned, "I can do that." He can be very funny.

Late in the program, Finney came onstage with an "unexpected interruption" to announce the establishment of a musical theater scholarship in Berg's name. CCM patrons Douglas Duckett and Barbara Wittenbaum read emotional testimonials, praising Berg for his "passion, generosity, [and willingness to] give everything he has." This musical theater program, Duckett said, "is beyond amazing…it is the finest in the country." And it doesn't just happen, he noted. It happens because "good, dedicated—and yes, sometimes difficult and obsessive—people make it happen."

Berg remained impassive during the praise then thanked the assembled crowd simply and sincerely. The auditorium, filled with his fans, erupted in applause.

1. TALENT. *You need it. But your skill set—acting, singing, dancing—is only the beginning. What else can you do? Balinese fire dancing? Sign language? Learn some other skills, because they're marketable. Then ask yourself: Do I have the ability to communicate? Do I have the confidence to put them across?*

In the end, Aubrey Berg is all about talent—his own, his colleagues', his students', and that of the writers, composers, and

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choreographers who created the American musical theater. When talent is in abundance, as it is when he watches some of his own graduates perform—at the Aronoff, at "The Muny" in St. Louis, with Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, on Broadway... wherever they've been cast—he is never happier. And when talent is wanting, as it can be in community or regional theater productions, he is restless. He'd rather be someplace else.

That's the thing about Berg, says Gage: "He does not accept limitations." And his demands pay off. "Students know that if they try to give 101 percent every time—if the moment he says jump, we all jump—when we see the [results] in the next run, later that day, or tomorrow at the next rehearsal, we all get goose bumps." Berg doesn't burden himself with second-guessing. "There are so many other directors who need to experiment for weeks and weeks about staging, and then of course restaging, their direction," says Gage. "Not so with Mr. Berg."

That assurance was on display in early January, when Berg agreed to a cameo appearance in a recital by Patricia Linhart, the conservatory's voice instructor for sophomores. A celebration of her 60th birthday, as well as a showcase for her considerable abilities, it offered up Berg as comic relief. In a take-off of Noel Coward's famous patter song "Don't Put Your Daughter on the Stage, Mrs. Worthington," he archly roasted the star attraction while wearing a black T-shirt that said, "Bubba Knows Better." The largely student audience screamed in delight, hammering home to anyone with a doubt that the cult of Aubrey Berg is as much a part of CCM as memories of Patricia Corbett, and that among his many talents, self-promotion and the creation of his own mystique are not least.

"I trained in a period when the director was in charge of the project," he says. "I've never had much time for 'let's-all-decide-what-we're-going-to-do-and-accept-that-as-best.' There are directors who do that, but I'm not one of them."

Bubba doesn't just know better. He knows best.

AGING OUT

continued from page 89

had such a bad experience with my own."

FOSTER CARE WAS created to provide safe, temporary homes for children who have been so severely abused or neglected the court decides it's unsafe for them to remain with their caregivers. The idea is straightforward enough: While caseworkers attempt to stabilize the family, the child is cared for in a loving environment. If returning home isn't possible, caseworkers are supposed to find the child another permanent home. The goal is clearly defined and mandated by law: Every child should end up with a safe, permanent family.

It didn't work like that for Melissa. Caseworkers tried, but they never could find her a permanent home. Instead, she was shuffled from one placement to another, like a piece of luggage on a whirlwind tour.

Huddled in one of their many "What To Do About Melissa" meetings, the caseworker and other professionals finally decided that she needed a lock-down, live-in treatment facility. The young teen was sent to a complex 90 minutes from Cincinnati. For the first time in her life, Melissa knew stability; knew where she'd be the next day, the next week, the next month. She was 14.

In Ohio, if a child isn't in a permanent home by the age of 16 or so, caseworkers start preparing the teen to live on her own. A child is placed in a furnished, paid apartment and given a weekly stipend. Caseworkers check in periodically. Melissa returned to Cincinnati when she was just shy of 16 and was deemed a suitable candidate for the Independent Living program. She was settled into her final placement: a sparsely-furnished one-bedroom apartment in College Hill.

For the most part she handled it well. She got herself up (usually) and on a city bus to attend a charter school. She carefully budgeted her weekly allowance, stretching the $40 to cover food, clothes, toiletries, cleaning products. It was in that apartment, on a rainy August morning in 2001, that Melissa turned 16. No one threw her a party, but she was happy just the same. *I'm sweet sixteen,* she said to herself.

In 2003, Melissa officially aged out of foster care. She practically skipped from the courtroom the day the magistrate "emancipated" her. She was free: of caseworkers, of court appearances, of foster parents who never became *her* parents, of homes that never became *her* home. She felt ready to take on the world, even though she was just 18, with no family, no support system, no job, no money, no skills. Seven years later she's a single mother of two, undereducated, unemployed, and at the end of her welfare benefits.

TO THOSE WHO keep track of such statistics, Melissa's poor outcome is no surprise. It's the norm. According to a 2007 University of Chicago study of Midwestern youth who had aged out of foster care systems, such kids were more than twice as likely not to have a high school diploma or GED. Only 47 percent were employed at the time of the survey, and more than half reported having been homeless more than once. Forty percent didn't have enough money to buy clothes; 20 percent couldn't pay the rent.

But then, what are our expectations for our own children? My sons, 20 and 17, couldn't support themselves fully; neither could their friends. And they've had safe, nurturing childhoods and strong family support. They have people to catch them when they fall, co-sign car loans, buy them socks. Yet we expect young adults who have nothing and no one to succeed at living on their own.

Some of the most important things we teach our kids can't be taught by a

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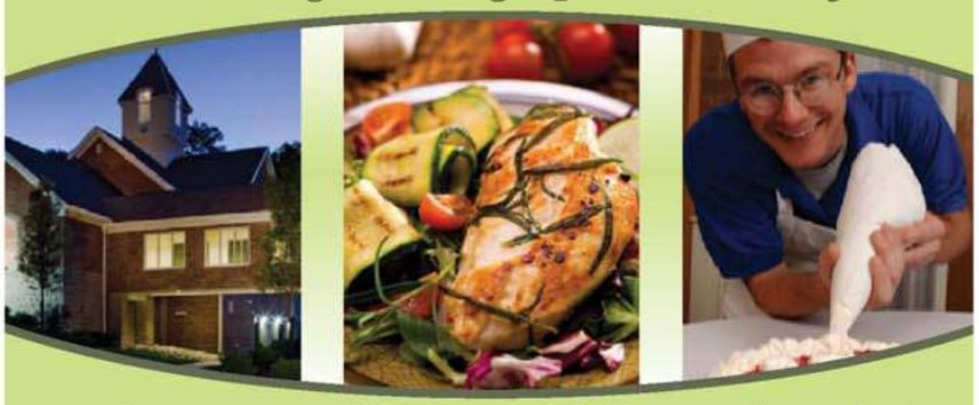

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system. They are the "kitchen table" skills and life lessons we preach over and over until they become part of our offspring's psyche: Sometimes You Have To Do Things You Don't Want To Do. Work Hard. Education Is Important. We are not born with these values; we are taught them—often by the adults we know and trust. For kids in foster care, it's a toss of the coin whether they ever experience and learn these lessons.

When I first started working with kids who had aged out, I was certain that education was the answer—the great leveler. If Melissa could get some education and training, I thought, she could earn a livable wage, maybe even get benefits. But it's not that simple. Many of these kids can't make it through school; often they can't make it *to* school.

When Melissa called to tell me she was enrolling in college, I offered to help. "What school are you thinking about?" I asked.

"The medical assistant program at Cincinnati State," she told me.

I knew Melissa had tried this before. She had enrolled in the two-year technical and community college not long after high school, before she became pregnant with her first child. (She says the baby's father was later killed. She had her second baby 18 months later. "That's enough," she told me. "I have my tubes tied now.") As a CASA volunteer, I had learned the hard way that you couldn't simply drop these kids off at the admissions office. So I went with her to meet with a campus guidance counselor. When the discussion turned to the number of hours she would take that first quarter, I weighed in.

"Do you think maybe you should start out with just a few classes...." I began. It was the same advice I gave my son when he started college.

"I can do it, Chris," Melissa interrupted, eyes hard, chin determined. She was opting for a heavy course load, to finish as quickly as possible. "I *want*

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this," she insisted. "You don't have any faith in me do you?" That stung.

"Ms. Santoro," the counselor said, in soothing counselor tones, fingers perched in an inverted V against his lips. "Our young people can surprise you. Sometimes they're capable of much more than you think they are. It's important not to hold them back." Melissa smiled at me triumphantly: *See, he believes in me.* Together they planned a full course load. I decided—hoped—that her optimism would outweigh the odds.

But the counselor, like most people, was clueless about Melissa's life. He didn't understand that Melissa would have to get up at 5 a.m. to take her kids on the bus to daycare, catch a second bus downtown, then a third to get to school in time for her 8 o'clock class, then repeat the trek after a full day of classes, fix dinner, and study. And how was he to know her 3-year-old had asthma, her 18-month-old got ear infections, and that these conditions required frequent night visits to Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, which often resulted in Melissa arriving back home at dawn with two cranky kids who were too sick for daycare? He also couldn't know that Melissa had no reliable family—no one to act as a backup babysitter—so she'd be stuck at home with her sick kids. Nor could he know that the complexities of Melissa's life weigh her down and surround her like a fog, making everything that much more difficult.

In April 2008, three months after her excited telephone call, Melissa failed all her classes at Cincinnati State. She didn't re-enroll.

A job, that's what she needs, I thought. I was still feeling optimistic about the possibilities. It wouldn't last long.

AS I HELPED Melissa fill out employment applications, I realized how little she knew about the job search process.

"I got a job, Chris," she called to tell me one Friday afternoon. She'd been in a

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popular shoe store, and the manager told her she'd be great in sales. "He told me all I have to do is fill out an online application and I got the job."

"Really?" I said. Call me pessimistic, but I suspected the manager had the hots for Melissa. This particular store is notorious among the kids I work with for their commission plan.

"How will you get paid?" I asked. Melissa told me she had to sell so many shoes per week. It seemed like an impossibly high number. I asked what would happen if she didn't reach the quota. Her sigh told me she thought I was *so* negative.

"It'll be alright, Chris," she said. "He said he'd give me a little time to get practice."

Melissa doesn't have a computer, so I filled out the online application while she dictated. We got to the part where she had to choose a position. "There's sales manager and salesperson," I said.

"Sales manager," she said immediately.

"Melissa, you don't have any experience in sales!" I countered.

She got huffy. "Chris, you don't know the situation. The guy said my training as a nursing assistant counts."

In general, I try not to tell Melissa what to do. I want her to make her own decisions, to know I have confidence in her. "OK," I said, clicking the Sales Manager box. But I was dying to know. "Why did you choose manager rather than salesperson?"

"Because I don't want anybody telling me what to do," she said.

She didn't get the job. Not that one, or any other.

Melissa never understands why I am so slow at comprehending her life. I never understand how she lives that life. Where do I begin?

AT MY SUGGESTION Melissa looked into Cincinnati Works, a job readiness program that teaches the soft skills of looking for and keeping a job, then helps participants find employment. Although she was apathetic about the benefits ("I *know* how to look for a job, Chris"), Melissa signed up.

Twenty minutes before class the following Monday, I called her. I assumed she would be getting off the bus downtown. "Hey Melissa, you all ready for today?" I, at least, was excited.

"No." She sounded weary. "I overslept."

"What?!" I nearly screeched. "Why?"

"I was up late doing my hair."

This time I definitely screeched. "Doing your hair?!" She knew I was disappointed, and frustrated.

Cincinnati Works starts a new session every Monday. But the next Monday her daughter was sick. The next Melissa had daycare problems. The next week, medical issues took center stage.

"I had a seizure or something yesterday," she told me on the phone, her voice utterly drained, kids squealing in the background. "A friend took me to the ER. They said I blacked out. Said I needed to see a neurologist. Said they can't do an ultrasound in the ER, that I have to find a gynecologist. But I do have a bacterial infection and I got a prescription."

I didn't know where to start. "Did you fill it?" seemed the logical first question.

"No," she said. "Oh, and they found a lump on the back on my head. They said I should get a biopsy. Where do I do that?"

I tried to take it all in, then decided I needed to hear it again. Melissa sighed at having to repeat herself. She never understands why I am so slow at comprehending her life. I never understand how she lives that life. I pieced together the story: They had done a pap test, discovered she had an infection, and prescribed an antibiotic (the one she hadn't filled). The doctor wanted her to see a neurologist for the passing out, and someone to do a biopsy for the lump on the back of her head.

Where to begin? I decided I would have to help her get a family doctor. "How about if I get a list of doctors that take your Medicaid card?" I suggested.

"That'd be great," she sighed with genuine relief.

ONE YEAR LATER, Melissa still hasn't made that appointment with a family physician. In her train wreck of a life, the emergency room embodies her concept of health care: it's not a priority until it's a crisis.

But as pressing as Melissa's medical problems are, I feel as though her emotional issues are even more debilitating. Once, when she told me she had long crying jags, low energy, and lack of interest in anything, I asked if she knew what depression was. "Not really," she said. "I thought it was just the way I am." She also told me she frequently has horrible visions and recurrent memories of things that happened to her as a kid.

So I launched into a campaign to find a therapist who would work with her and, after many weeks, located a program that would accept her for free. Melissa went twice before the complications set in—childcare problems, transportation issues, missed appointments. Two visits and she was finished with therapy. Another ladder to nowhere.

WHEN I BARGED into Melissa's world in 2008, I thought for sure that education would end her unemployment, her dependency on public assistance, her inability to achieve self-sufficiency. I thought that if I could just help her solve some of the medical and emotional issues, she could get—and stay—on her feet. But I discovered, over and over again, just how little prepared she was for adulthood, and how abysmal the hole she'd been dropped into was. Each time I

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think it can't get any worse, it does.

This winter, another crisis phone call: Melissa was being threatened with eviction because, she said, an accused sex offender had used her address as his own. Before the mess could be sorted out, she packed up and moved. Again I found myself scurrying to steer her toward a solution—this time, looking for a homeless shelter.

It has been two years since I started working with Melissa, and she's worse off than before. She and her children are homeless; she moves from one sketchy acquaintance to another, filling her days with rounds of calls to shelters to find an opening, meeting with social workers to discuss her dwindling options. Recently she was telling me what she'd do once she finally had a place to live: She'd find a job; she was determined.

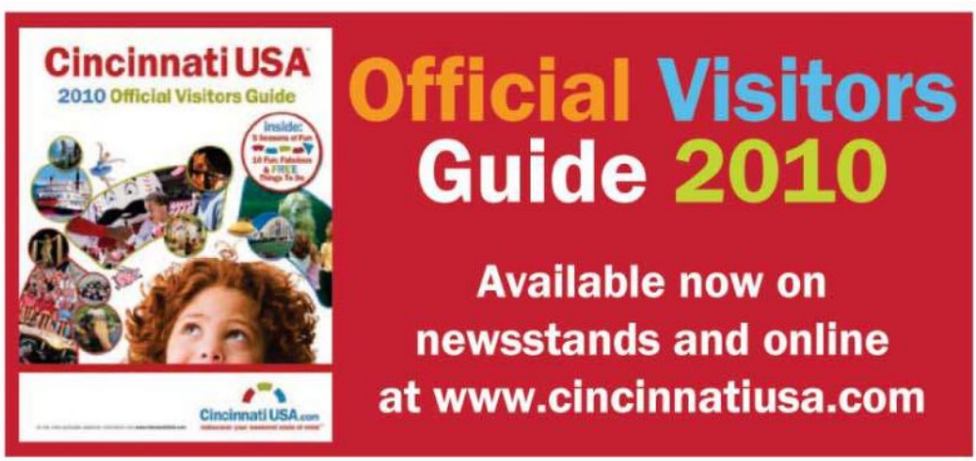
"You can go back to Cincinnati Works again," I suggested gently. "They can help you."

But I saw that look again, accusing me of a traitorous lack of faith. "Chris," she said, "I can *do* this."

All she needs is someone to help her. That's what I thought when I first began working with her. And at the time I believed it. But now, looking back through the telescope at our time together, I wonder. Deeper than the education challenge, wider than the emotional issues, higher than the missed "kitchen table" skills, the real issue is an alarming one: If a child doesn't get what they need in childhood, can they ever get it? Deeper down still, I wonder: What, really, are Melissa's chances? What have she and I accomplished? Will she ever find a job? Will she have the work ethic, the people skills, the social skills to keep it? And if not, will her kids end up in the system? Will this whole sad story be repeated in a new generation?

If only, I think. But then I wonder, If only *what?* If only she'd gone into foster care sooner? Stayed there longer? If only she'd had a different home? A better start?

I don't have the answer. The hole is too deep.



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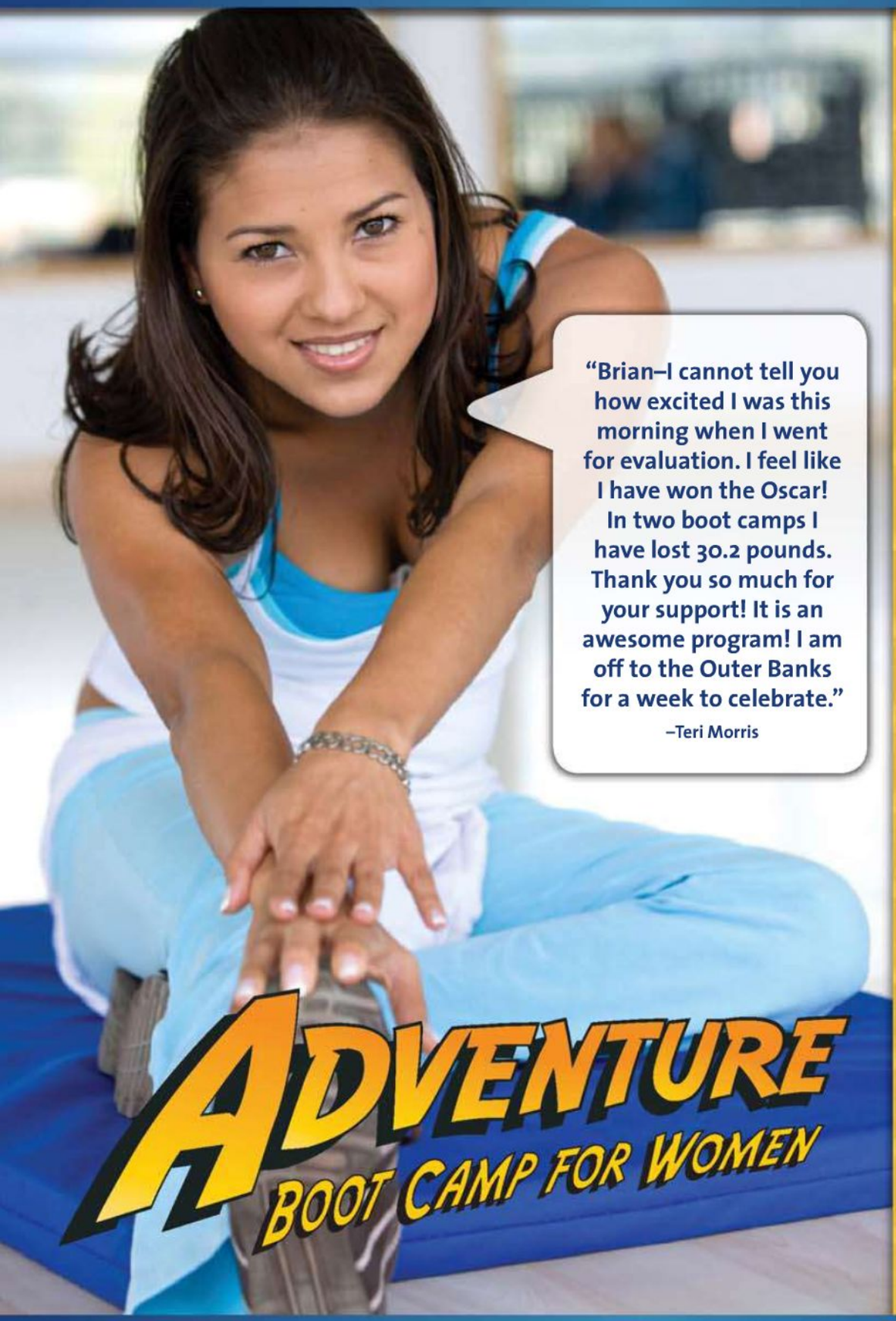

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PALOMINO RESTAURANT, ROTISSERIA & BAR, *505 Vine St., downtown, (513) 381-1300.* Casually upscale setting with a view of Fountain Square. Regional American cuisine inspired by rustic European recipes including daily soups, pasta, artichoke salmon, and certified Angus beef. $10–$35. Children's menu. Full bar, wine list. Reservations recommended. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

THE REDMOOR, *3187 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 871-6789.* A dining theater with American fare served against the backdrop of stagelights and a variety of live bands. $5–$23. Full bar, live music. Dinner Wed–Sat. MCC.

THE RESTAURANTS AT PALM COURT, *at Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, 35 W. Fifth St., downtown, (513) 421-9100.* Featuring American fare in a casual setting. The Bar at Palm Court features a full bar with an extensive wine list. Valet parking. Piano music Fri & Sat, jazz trio Fri & Sat. Reservations suggested. Breakfast & dinner seven days, lunch Mon–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS, DC.

THE ROOKWOOD BAR & RESTAURANT, *1077 Celestial St., Mt. Adams, (513) 421-5555.* American bar and grille in the former kiln house of Rookwood Pottery. Serves burgers, seafood, steaks, salads, and sandwiches, $8–$26. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

SILVERGLADE'S ON 8TH, *236 E. Eighth St. at Sycamore, downtown, (513) 361-0600.* Fresh sandwiches, soups, dine in or carryout. Under $7. Breakfast Mon–Fri, lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

SPORTS PAGE RESTAURANT, *626 Vine St., downtown, (513) 721-0067; 823 Main St., downtown, (513) 241-9176.* Cincinnati chili, burgers, salads, sandwiches, plate lunches, $5–$6. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat (Main: Mon–Fri). MCC.

SUNNY DELI, *in Carew Tower, 441 Vine St., downtown, (513) 651-5090.* Soups, sandwiches, and salads,

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plus the Wednesday special, Korean dolsat bi bim bab. Under $10. Breakfast all day. Catering. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. Cash or check.

SYMPHONY HOTEL, *210 W. 14th St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 721-3353.* Housed in the 1871 Ehrgott mansion. Offers five-course dinners for Symphony, Opera, May Festival, and Pops performances, $42, seatings from 5:45. MCC.

TINA'S, *350 W. Fourth St., downtown, (513) 621-3567.* Serves chili, burgers, wings, plus soups, salads, and sandwiches, $5.50–$7. Full bar. Lunch seven days. MCC, DS.

TINKS CAFÉ, *3410 Telford St., Clifton, (513) 961-6500.* Sophisticated Southern cuisine with a seasonal menu, including ruby red trout, black bean torta, diver-caught sea scallops, and Tinks gumbo, $13–$22. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

WASHINGTON PLATFORM SALOON AND RESTAURANT, *1000 Elm St., downtown, (513) 421-0110.* All-American food in turn-of-the-century saloon. Potato leek soup, apricot ginger chops, pasta, and apple nut chicken, $15–$20. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DC, DS.

EAST

A.J.'S ROADHOUSE, *6735 Kellogg Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 231-2447.* American food in airy, open setting. Pasta, seafood, and steaks, $6.95–$15.95. Full bar. Reservations for large parties. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

ANDERSON TOWNSHIP PUB, *6694 Clough Pke., Anderson Twp., (513) 231-0601.* Generous burgers, taco salad, sandwiches, and light bites. Daily specials and children's menu, $4–$9. Lunch & dinner seven days (Sun during football season). MCC.

ARTHUR'S, *3516 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 871-5543.* Neighborhood café, antique bar, garden. Burgers, salads, soups, and deli sandwiches, $7–$14. Children's menu, full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

BREW HOUSE, *1047 E. McMillan St., Walnut Hills, (513) 961-9058.* Hamburgers, fish, steak hoagies, homemade soups and desserts, daily specials, $4–$7. Full bar, live music Sat & Tues, Internet jukebox. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V, DS.

CHICKEN ON THE RUN, *7255 Ohio Ave., Deer Park, (513) 791-6577.* Sandwiches, burgers, shrimp basket, chili, soups under $7. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri. MCC, DS.

CLOUGH CROSSINGS, *6892 Clough Pke., Anderson Twp., (513) 624-7800.* American cuisine in casual setting. Features almond crusted salmon, pan roasted chicken, Cajun seafood fettuccine, $7.95–$21.95. Outdoor courtyard dining. Full bar. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

DILLY CAFÉ, *6818 Wooster Pike, Mariemont, (513) 561-5233.* Cozy restaurant/wine shop with two-tier English courtyard. Features soups, specialty salads and sandwiches, quiche, vegetarian items, and bistro-style dinners, $8–$28. Live music Wed–Sat. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

EMBERS, *8170 Montgomery Rd., Kenwood, (513) 984-8090.* The folks who brought you Kenwood's Trio add a sushi bar to a menu of steaks, chops, and seafood in their second area eatery. Filet Oscar, rotisserie chicken, sea bass, $19–$43. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

THE ESTABLISHMENT, *2900 Wasson Rd., Oakley, (513) 631-9000.* Bar food including burgers, wings, and fried fish $4–$8. Outdoor dining. Dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

HUGO, *3235A Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 321-4846.* Sophisticated southern cuisine with an emphasis on local ingredients. Scallops, country ham, lamb, and slow-cooked ribs, $20–$26. Full bar with comfortable lounge. Outdoor dining. Private dining room available by reservation. Reservations recommended. Dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DS.

LEBO'S OF CALIFORNIA, *5869 Kellogg Ave., California, (513) 232-1763.* A variety of entrées: chicken, half-pound burgers, lunch specials, $5.50–$15. Line dancing Monday nights, karaoke Tues–Sat. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

MADEIRA INN, *7717 Laurel Ave., Madeira, (513) 561-8879.* Tavern-type food such as hoagies and hamburgers, $3–$6. Tuesday features homemade German dishes, Wednesday is 50-cent chicken wing night. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri. MC, V, DS.

MAIN STREET CAFÉ, *6903 Main St., Newtown, (513) 272-2030.* Friendly neighborhood café offers burgers, chili, soups, salads, $3.75–$7.25. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

MT. LOOKOUT TAVERN, *3212 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 871-9633.* Sandwiches, chicken wings, bar munchies. Under $8. Live music Wed–Sat, karaoke Tues, full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

MURPHIN RIDGE INN, *750 Murphin Ridge Rd., West Union, (937) 544-2263.* Charming restaurant situated amid the foothills of the Appalachians. Spiceberry smoked pork tenderloins, black pepper crusted organic Angus strip steak, homemade soups, salads. Entrées $20–$32. Full bar. Reservations required. Dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DS.

NATIONAL EXEMPLAR, *in the Mariemont Inn, 6880 Wooster Pke., Mariemont, (513) 271-2103.* Great breakfasts including oversized omelettes and pancakes. Steaks, fresh seafood, prime rib, and pastas for dinner, $8–$30. Children's menu, two full bars. Reservations accepted for dinner. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

RED KITCHEN, *2724 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 871-3200.* Steakhouse, raw bar in a contemporary setting, $15–$35. Full bar, happy hour. Reservations accepted. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

RYAN'S GRILL, BUFFET, AND BAKERY, *4450 Ryan's Way, Batavia, (513) 752-2616.* Large selection of All-American food, including the all-you-can-eat Mega Bar, around $12. Breakfast Sat & Sun, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

[BITES]

EAT THIS

» We love Kentuckyaki from Bourbon Barrel Foods. All natural, sweetened with Kentucky sorghum, seasoned with ginger and garlic, and aged in bourbon barrels, it snaps. www.bourbonbarrelfoods.com

TERRACE CAFÉ, *in Cincinnati Art Museum, 953 Eden Park Dr., Walnut Hills, (513) 639-2986.* Soups, salads, and sandwiches served amid the finest art in the city, $7.95–$10.95. Outdoor patio, catering, children's menu. Lunch Tues–Sun. MCC.

TERRY'S TURF CLUB, *4618 Eastern Ave., Linwood, (513) 533-4222.* Black Angus patties on Shadeau bread and toppings that include foie gras, roasted red pepper and goat cheese sauce, and a burgundy wine reduction with wild mushrooms and truffles. Under $14. Full bar. Extensive beer selection. Lunch Sat & Sun, dinner seven days. MC, V.

TRIO, *7565 Kenwood Rd., Kenwood, (513) 984-1905.* California-style pizzas, filet, pastas, salads, sandwiches, $12–$30.95. Children's menu, more than 200 wines, full bar. Reservations suggested. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

915 PUB & GRILL, *915 N. Ft. Thomas Ave., Ft. Thomas, (859) 441-1333.* Grouper sandwich, pub burgers, and homemade cole slaw, $5.25–$8. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

BAR LOUIE, *1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 291-4222.* Oversized sandwiches, pasta, blackened salmon, $6–$24. Outdoor dining, full bar. Reservations for large parties. Lunch & dinner seven days, until 2 am. MCC, DS, DC.

BARLEYCORN'S, *1073 Industrial Rd., Cold Spring, (859) 442-3400; 2642 Dixie Hwy., Lakeside Park, (859) 331-6633.* Upbeat family restaurant. Appetizers, sandwiches, salads, and entrées, $5.99–$17. Big-screen TVs. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sun. MCC, DS, DC.

BB RIVERBOATS, *101 Riverboat Row, Newport, (859) 261-8500.* Lunch, dinner, brunch, sightseeing, and private charter cruises. Cruises range from $13–$40 per person. Senior citizens' and children's prices. Boarding at foot of Columbia Street on Riverboat Row, Newport. Reservations recommended. MCC, DS.

BEHLE STREET CAFÉ, *50 E. Rivercenter Blvd., Covington, (859) 291-4100.* Pastas, ribs, pork chops, and salads, $12–$40. Children's menu, banquet facilities, full bar. Reservations recommended. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

BELLEVUE BISTRO, *313 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, (859) 581-5600.* Neighborhood bistro serves Taste of Belgium waffles and goetta sandwiches for breakfast, Kentucky barbecued ribs, or Thai-spiced sea scallops for dinner. Fresh soups made daily. $12.95–$25. Seasonal outdoor dining. Catering, carryout available. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat, dinner Wed–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

BOUQUET RESTAURANT AND WINE BAR, *519 Main St., Covington, (859) 491-7777.* Stylish wine bar and restaurant in MainStrasse. Contemporary American menu includes lamb chops, crab cakes, salads, and vegetarian entrées, $12–$25. Extensive wine list, nonsmoking. Dinner Wed–Sat. MCC, DS.

DETROIT JOE'S, *115 E. Ninth St., Newport, (859) 261-5637.* Burgers, sandwiches, soups, and salads

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for lunch, from $7–$8. Dinners of steaks, ribs, and seafood, plus specials, $7–$29. Reservations suggested. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Fri & Sat. MC, V.

FLANAGANS FRONT PORCH SALOON, *7134 Turfway Rd., Florence, (859) 371-9992.* Cod sandwiches, blackened prime rib, chili, $6–$15. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

GREYHOUND TAVERN, *2500 Dixie Hwy., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 331-3767.* Southern-fried chicken, chops, prime beef, and seafood, and massive onion rings, $15–$24.50. Children's menu, outdoor dining. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sun. MCC.

GUYS AND DOLLS, *4210 Alexandria Pike, Cold Spring, (859) 441-4888.* Nightclub and restaurant features dance lessons, karaoke, car shows, and, by the way, burgers and pub grub. Under $10. Full bar. Themed dance nights, live bands. Check www.guysanddollsllc.com for schedule. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

JERZEES PUB & GRUB, *708 Monmouth St., Newport, (859) 491-3500.* Sports bar. Come for buckets of beer, stay for wings, burgers and fries, under $10. Full bar. Plasma TVs everywhere. Live music on weekends. Outside patio with cornhole. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

LUDLOW-BROMLEY YACHT CLUB, *860 Elm St., Ludlow, (859) 291-8132.* Steaks, ribs, cod, pork chops, or maybe the mushroom and Swiss cheese hamburger. Breakfast buffet every other Sunday. Under $15. Live music on weekends. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

MAHOGANY'S BAR & GRILL, *3715 Winston Ave., Latonia, (859) 261-1029.* Handsome bar and grill features gourmet black Angus steak burgers, $7–$14. Full bar, live music. Dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DS, DC.

MANSION HILL TAVERN, *502 Washington Ave., Newport, (859) 581-0100.* Home cooked cuisine with daily lunch specials, $4.75–$6.50. Full bar, live music Fri–Mon. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Sat–Mon. Cash.

OTTO'S, *521 Main St., Covington, (859) 491-6678.* Sandwiches, salads, soups, and entrées such as sautéed tilapia in lemon caper butter sauce with fingerling potatoes and roasted asparagus, and tomato pie, $19–$29. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Tues–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS, DC.

PEEWEE'S PLACE, *2325 Anderson Rd., Crescent Springs, (859) 341-4977.* Strip steak, charbroiled chicken, fish, pasta, and great burgers, cod fish sandwiches, wings, and chili $6–$10. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

RIVERVIEW 360 REVOLVING RESTAURANT, *668 W. Fifth St., Covington, (859) 491-5300.* Eclectic American fare in a revolving restaurant with stellar view of the city, $15–$29. Children's menu. Dinner Tues–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

SKINNY LEGS PUB & GRILL, *19 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, (859) 261-5111.* Quickly becoming a neighborhood favorite. Serves better-than-average pub grub, like Angus beef burgers, Cuban sandwiches, and pizza $5.95–$7.95. Live music on weekends. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

THE TOUSEY HOUSE TAVERN, *5963 N. Jefferson St., Burlington, (859) 586-9900.* Classic American cuisine in an historic house in Burlington. Salads, sandwiches, plus filet mignon, halibut, glazed pork chops, and the Tousey hot brown, $7.50–$24.95. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

YORK ST. CAFÉ, *738 York St., Newport, (859) 261-9675.* Owners Terry and Betsy Cunningham serve steaks, seafood, ethnic, and vegetarian specialties, $6–$28. Large garden patio. Live music. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DS.

10 WEST, *in the Cincinnati Marriott Rivercenter, 10 W. RiverCenter Blvd., Covington, (859) 392-3750.* Overlooks the river. Regional American cuisine, including pasta, ribs, and salad, $15–$31. Full bar. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

ZOLA PUB AND GRILL, *626 Main St., Covington, (859) 261-7510.* Above-average pub grub includes turkey ciabatta and some of the area's best burgers, $6–$10. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

NORTH

ATHENIAN RESTAURANT, *10966 Reading Rd., Sharonville, (513) 733-8482.* A "double-decker shop" with gyros to boot. Under $8. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V, DS.

BACK PORCH SALOON, *9626 Princeton-Glendale Rd., Hamilton, (513) 874-2432.* American cuisine. Features prime rib sandwiches, black and blue burgers, $5–$20. Full bar, outdoor dining. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

BRANDYWINE INN RESTAURANT, *204 S. Main St., Monroe, (513) 539-8911.* Filet mignon, seafood $18.95–$29.95, prix fixe multi-course dinner $38.95. Full bar, wine list. Reservations suggested. Dinner Thurs–Sat (or any night for private groups of 12 or more, with reservation). Cash or check.

BROWN DOG CAFÉ, *5893 Pfeiffer Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 794-1610.* Casually upscale inventive dining. Grilled seafood, meats, pastas, wild game, $18–$26. Lunch $7–$12. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

CHICAGO JOE'S, *36 Eswin St., Greenhills, (513) 851-5637.* Vienna beef hot dogs with lots of topping options, plus Italian beef sandwiches, pizza puffs. Under $8. Carryout. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

CORNERSTONE CAFÉ AND BAKEHOUSE, *6096 West Chester Rd., West Chester, (513) 942-6016.* Variety of sandwiches, salads, soups, wraps, coffee, and pizza, $5–$6.50. Carryout, delivery available. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat, dinner Mon–Fri. MCC, DS.

CULVER'S, *5742 Tylersville Rd., Mason, (513) 770-4000.* Signature ButterBurger has a bun buttered around the crown. Chicken, pork tenderloin, and frozen custard. Quick-service family atmosphere. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V.

deSHA'S AMERICAN TAVERN, *11320 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 247-9933.* Lodge/resort ambience. Features chicken, beef, and comfort foods, $10.95–$26.95. Wine list, imported beer, and plenty of single-barrel bourbon. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

FRIENDLY STOP, *985 Congress Ave., Glendale, (513) 771-7427.* Historic neighborhood pub. Grilled chicken, house-smoked barbecue, soups, salads, and daily specials. Lunch & dinner seven days. Cash.

THE GOLDEN LAMB, *27 S. Broadway St., Lebanon, (513) 932-5065.* Housed in Ohio's oldest inn. Roast duckling, lamb, fresh seafood, steaks, and prime rib, $18–$35. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

GRAND FINALE, *3 E. Sharon Rd., Glendale, (513) 771-5925.* Chicken ginger, rack of lamb, steak, and seafood, $10.95–$42.95. House-made breads, pastries, and desserts. Children's menu. Garden courtyard open year-round. Full bar. Lunch Tues–Sat, dinner Tues–Sun, brunch Sun. MCC, DS, DC.

HOMER'S ORIGINAL SMORGASBORD, *9972 Reading Rd., Evendale, (513) 563-2277.* Family restaurant with 13 to 15 entrées daily. Salad bar with 64 items. Lunch $5.99, dinner $7.35. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

IRON HORSE RESTAURANT, *40 Village Square, Glendale, (513) 772-3333.* Steak, fresh specialty seafood, creative vegetarian specialties, $8–$38. Homemade desserts, full bar, private party rooms, live jazz on weekends. Lunch & dinner Tues–Fri, dinner Sat. MCC, DS, DC.

LUCY'S DINER, *8907 Reading Rd., Reading, (513) 821-5900.* Extensive selection of double-deckers, burgers, and chili, $6.90–$12.95. Breakfast Sat & Sun, lunch & dinner Tues–Sat. MC, V.

MARKET STREET GRILLE, *205 Harrison Ave., Harrison, (513) 202-0200.* Charming 1930s-style restaurant serves a wide array of steaks, ribs, pork, seafood, pasta, and a surprisingly good jambalaya, $8.50–$24.95. Wine and beer. Children's menu. Catering, private parties. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sun. MC, V.

MIMI'S CAFÉ, *5050 Deerfield Blvd., Mason, (513) 770-0720.* Family style dining including pasta, chicken pot pies, pot roast, meatloaf, and breakfast all day, $10–$16. Children's menu, carryout. Reservations accepted. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

PAXTON'S GRILL, *126 W. Loveland Ave., Loveland, (513) 583-1717.* Loaded with war memorabilia and munchies such as burgers and wings. Daily specials, soups, salad, and sandwiches, $7–$15. Live music on the weekends. Lunch & dinner seven days, breakfast Sat & Sun. MCC, DS.

THE POLO GRILLE, *5035 Deerfield Blvd., Mason, (513) 701-7656.* Offers eclectic American fare including specialty pizzas. Full bar, wine list, martini flights, carryout. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

RED ONION CAFÉ, *214 S. Main St., Monroe, (513) 360-0180.* Focus is on local and responsibly grown foods. Angus burgers and sandwiches, salads, house-made crab cakes, steak, jumbo shrimp and crab four-cheese Alfredo, $6.50–$26.99. Full bar. Children's menu. Catering. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

RILEY'S RESTAURANT AND BAKERY, *18 Eswin St., Greenhills, (513) 851-8810.* Casual family restaurant/bakery. Cookie jar collection (more than

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300) displayed. Food is traditional American: all-natural grilled chicken, steaks, burgers, pork, $7–$15. Children's menu. No alcohol. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

ROOT BEER STAND, *11566 Reading Rd., Sharonville, (513) 769-4349.* Home-brewed root beer by the glass or by the gallon. Also burgers, sandwiches, and footlong cheese coneys, $1.50–$5.50. Open March 27th through October. Lunch & dinner seven days. Cash.

SAMMY'S GOURMET BURGERS AND BEER, *4767 Creek Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 745-9484.* Gourmet burgers, salads, sandwiches, wraps, hot dogs, wings, soups, and desserts. Oh, and beer. $4.50–$9.50. Carryout. Full bar. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

SILVER SPRING HOUSE, *8322 E. Kemper Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 489-7044.* Burgers, burritos, seafood, and salads, $7.25–$22. Specialty citrus-marinated Amish chicken. Children's menu. Outdoor dining, full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

SKIP'S BAGEL DELI, *12092 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 677-3354.* Fresh baked bagels, sandwiches, salads, desserts. Catering, carryout. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

SLATTS PUB, *4858 Cooper Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 791-2223.* Pastas, hand-cut steaks, fresh fish, $10–$26. Sandwiches, stews, pasta for lunch, $7–$10. Outdoor dining, full bar. Wide variety of martinis. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

SLEEPY HOLLOW, *378 Bridge St., Loveland, (513) 677-0290.* Steaks, ribs, burgers, sandwiches, $6.95–$22.95. Full bar, children's menu. Lunch Tues–Sat, dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DS.

TABBY'S AMERICAN BAR & GRILL, *2920 West U.S. Rte. 22, Maineville, (513) 697-7575; 5524 Parkside Dr., Mason, (513) 459-7223.* Casual. Serves American fare: sandwiches, salads, and steaks, $8.95–$22.50. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

TANO BISTRO, *204 W. Loveland Ave., Loveland, (513) 683-8266.* From the former executive chef at McCormick and Schmick's comes this moderately priced, moderately upscale bistro featuring Atlantic salmon, beef boscaiola, scallops, and vegetable Napoleon, $15–$27. Dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

THROUGH THE GARDEN, *10738 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 791-2199.* Pasta, grilled seafood, burgers, stir-fries, New York strip, $6.50–$22.50. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

TOOT'S, *12191 Montgomery Rd., Loveland, (513) 697-9100.* Sports-oriented with 14 TVs. Chicken, ribs, and seafood, under $16. Children's menu, full bar, carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

THE WHITE HOUSE INN, *4940 Mulhauser Rd., Hamilton, (513) 860-1110.* Heartland cooking includes chicken, Kansas City strip sirloin, prime rib au jus, fliet mignon, and chops, $16–$30. Children's menu, full bar. Lunch & Dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DC.

WEST

BACALLS CAFÉ, *6118 Hamilton Ave., College Hill, (513) 541-8804.* Moderately priced American food. Big burgers, chicken teriyaki, reubens, salads, and soups, $6.95–$13.95. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

BLIND PIG GRILLE & BAR, *5880 Cheviot Rd., White Oak, (513) 385-9999.* Smothered chicken, fresh seafood, chops, burgers, and salads, $7–$12. Children's menu. Full bar. Reservations for large parties. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CABANA ON THE RIVER, *7445 Forbes Rd., Sayler Park, (513) 941-7442.* Grilled mahi-mahi sandwiches, pork barbecue, steak on a stick, $4.50–$12.95. Outdoor patio with Tiki bar, live music on Fri & Sat, DJ on Wed, two full bars. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

GABBY'S CAFÉ, *515 Wyoming Ave., Wyoming, (513) 821-6040.* Family oriented American café with Italian specialties, grouper sandwich. Kids can make their own pizza, $12.50–$19.50. Carryout, full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

HENKE WINERY, *3077 Harrison Ave., Westwood, (513) 662-WINE (9463).* Owners Joan and Joe Henke make 15 varieties of wine and offer a full menu of chicken, fish, steaks, and daily features, $12.95–$28.95. Reservations accepted. Brunch and lunch Sat, dinner Mon–Sat. DS, MC, V.

HOT WINGS SPORTS CAFÉ, *5297 Delhi Pike, Delhi, (513) 347-3333.* Opened by former Reds pitcher Scott Klingenbeck, this family friendly sports bar serves double-deckers, hoagies, sandwiches, and appetizers. Full bar, happy hour, carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

MR. GENE'S DOGHOUSE, *3703 Beekman St., South Cumminsville, (513) 541-7636.* Hot dogs, metts, coneys, wings. Soft serve ice cream for cones, malts, and shakes, up to $6.49. Open Feb–Dec for lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

NICK & TOM'S RESTAURANT & BAR, *5774 Bridgetown Rd., Bridgetown, (513) 574-4242.* Seafood, steaks, pasta, pizza, and their famous spinach salad, $8.99–$19.99. Children's menu. Happy hour. Reservations accepted for large parties. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

PUTZ'S CREAMY WHIP, *Putz Place and West Fork Rd., Westwood, (513) 681-8668.* Yes, they have hot dogs and other ice cream stand fare, but go to Putz's for the galaxy's most creamaliscious soft-serve ice cream. Lunch & dinner seven days.

RILEY'S RESTAURANT, *11568 Springfield Pk., Springdale, (513) 771-3361.* Casual family restaurant/bakery. Food is traditional American: all-natural grilled chicken, steaks, burgers, pork, $6–$20. Children's menu. No alcohol. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

ROHRER'S TAVERN, *418 Three Rivers Pkwy., North Bend, (513) 941-4266.* American menu features liver and onions, fish with mac & cheese, coleslaw, or hot slaw. Plus, Angus-beef burgers, hand-rolled onion rings, $6.99–$12.99. Carryout. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

SANTORINI RESTAURANT, *3414 Harrison Ave., Cheviot, (513) 662-8080.* Chopped sirloin, roast beef, hamburgers, chili. Daily specials. Breakfast & lunch seven days, dinner Mon–Sat. Cash.

VINOKLET WINERY, *11069 Colerain Ave., Colerain Twp., (513) 385-9309.* Dine overlooking the vineyard. Dinner à la carte Wed & Thurs, grill-out Fri & Sat ($35). Reservations recommended. MCC.

WILD MIKE'S, *4498 Harrison Ave., Bridgetown, (513) 598-1616; 5043 Delhi Rd., Delhi, (513) 451-9464; 7587 Bridgetown Rd., Bridgetown, (513) 467-9464.* Hot chicken wings, burgers, salads, grilled chicken and more at this west side favorite. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CENTRAL

MONTGOMERY INN AT THE BOATHOUSE, *925 Riverside Dr., downtown, (513) 721-7427.* Famous for barbecued choice pork loin-backs, plus chicken, New York sirloin, pork chops, $6.95–$32.95. Carryout, children's menu. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

EAST

BBQ REVUE, *4725 Madison Rd., Madisonville, (513) 871-3500.* Authentic atmosphere makes takeout a shame in this neighborhood staple. Smoked ribs and whole chickens, pork loin, and brisket, $3.25–$17.95. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DS.

CITY BBQ, *3804 Paxton Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 871-8890; 878 Eastgate North Dr., Eastgate, (513) 201-3030.* Ohio barbecue chain serves pulled pork, beef brisket, smoked chicken and sausage, and ribs, $4.99–$19.99. Carryout. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

WOE IS ME BARBECUE, *960 Kennedy's Landing, Glen Este, (513) 843-6570.* Carolina-style barbecue. Ribs, chicken, and sides, $4–$16. Carryout and catering available. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

KENTUCKY

FAMOUS DAVE'S BBQ, *4391 Houston Rd., Florence, (859) 647-7788.* American barbecue joint. Home of the "big slab." $6–$22. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

MONTGOMERY INN, *400 Buttermilk Pke., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 344-5333.* Famous for barbecued choice pork loin-backs, plus chicken, New York sirloin, pork chops, $6.95–$32.95. Carryout, children's menu. No reservations on Saturdays. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

WALT'S HITCHING POST, *3400 Madison Pike, Ft. Wright, (859) 331-0494.* Classic barbecue, smoked ribs, fried chicken, and salmon, $1.99–$24.99. Dinner seven days until midnight. MCC.

NORTH

BOSTON BUTZ PIT BBQ, *3754 Hamilton Cleves Rd., Ross, (513) 738-3111.* Authentic Memphis-style pulled pork pit barbecue, hickory-smoked baby back ribs, chicken, and beef brisket, $8.99–$23.99. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

BURBANK'S REAL BAR-B-Q, *11167 Dowlin Dr., Sharonville, (513) 771-1440.* Southern hickory-smoked pulled pork barbecue, baby-back ribs, chicken,

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$10.99–$20.99. Live blues Fri & Sat, open jam on Thurs. Children's menu, carryout, catering. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CITY BBQ, *7706 Voice of America Center Dr., West Chester, (513) 755-0518.* Ohio barbecue chain serves pulled pork, beef brisket, smoked chicken and sausage, and ribs, $4.99–$19.99. Carryout. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

JIM DANDY'S FAMILY BBQ, *2343 E. Sharon Rd., Sharonville, (513) 771-4888.* Hickory & cherry wood-smoked ribs, pulled chicken and pork, apple and cherry wood-smoked beef brisket, $6.50–$8.25. Caryout, children's menu, catering. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

KT'S BARBECUE & DELI, *8501 Reading Rd., Reading, (513) 761-0200.* Award-winning barbecue joint with a smokin' boneless rib meat sandwich. Under $20. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri, dinner Sat. MC, V.

MONTGOMERY INN, *9440 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, (513) 791-3482.* Famous for barbecued choice pork loin-backs, plus chicken, New York sirloin, pork chops, $6.95–$32.95. Carryout, children's menu. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

WEST

GOODIES BARBECUE RESTAURANT, *5841 Hamilton Ave., College Hill, (513) 542-4663.* Finger lickin' ribs served with collard greens, potato salad, and cole slaw. Plus chicken wings and sandwiches, $5–$22. Carryout. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

PIT TO PLATE, *8021 Hamilton Ave., Mt. Healthy, (513) 931-9100.* Authentic Texas hickory-smoked barbecue. Beef brisket, ribs, fish, and chicken. Traditional sides and homemade desserts, $4.95–$18.95. Beer. Catering. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

WALT'S BARBEQUE, *6040 Colerain Ave., Colerain Twp., (513) 923-9800.* Texas-style barbecue featuring baby back ribs, whole roasted chicken, beef brisket, and more than 20 different side dishes, $8.48–$19.99. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

CAJUN/ CARIBBEAN

CENTRAL

ISLAND FRYDAYS, *2826 Vine St., Corryville, (513) 498-0680.* Caribbean-themed restaurant serves curry, jerk chicken salads and wraps, oxtail, and pepper steak. Under $10. Carryout. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V.

EAST

ALLYN'S, *3538 Columbia Pkwy., Columbia-Tusculum, (513) 871-5779.* Fun, funky. Features Cajun, Mexican, seafood, and steaks, $5–$19. Shop inside has more than 250 wines and 120 beers. Live music Sun. Bar till midnight, Sun until 2 am. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

DEE FELICE CAFE, *529 Main St., Covington, (859) 261-2365.* Restaurant with a musical, New Orleans vibe. Excellent Cajun cuisine including steaks, pastas, seafood, $8.95–$36.95. Live music Tues, Thurs–Sat. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

KNOTTY PINE ON THE BAYOU, *6720 Licking Pke., Cold Spring, (859) 781-2200.* Classic riverside restaurant with a down-home Louisiana feel specializes in Cajun foods, such as blackened chicken, alligator, steaks, frog legs, oysters, shrimp, and crawfish, $10–$22. Children's menu. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Dinner Tues–Sun. DS, MC, V.

CELTIC

CENTRAL

BLACKFINN RESTAURANT & SALOON, *19 E. Seventh St., downtown, (513) 721-3466.* Irish-themed chain features steaks, seafood, pasta, sandwiches, $6.95–$25.99. Full bar, children's menu. Private parties available. BlackFinn Suite Nightclub open on weekend. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

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NICHOLSON'S TAVERN & PUB, *625 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 564-9111.* Scottish-themed restaurant offers shepherd's pie, rotisserie-roasted chicken, Atlantic salmon with kedgeree risotto, $8.95–$29.95. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Plenty of beers and single-malt scotches. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

THE PUB AT ROOKWOOD MEWS, *2692 Madison Rd., Norwood, (513) 841-2748.* A high energy British pub featuring classic pub fare, $9–$21. Full bar, including imported ales and spirits. Lunch Thurs–Sun, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

EAST

MOLLY MALONE'S IRISH PUB, *6111 Montgomery Rd., Pleasant Ridge, (513) 531-0700.* Irish tavern fare: fish & chips, shepherd's pie, burgers, and sandwiches, $4–$15. Full bar, large selection of whiskey and beer. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

O'BRYON'S IRISH PUB, *1998 Madison Rd., O'Bryonville, (513) 321-5525.* Burgers, chicken, salads, $5–$10.60. Happy hour Mon–Fri, with drink and appetizer specials. Seven days. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

THE CLADDAGH IRISH PUB, *1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 581-8888.* Irish fare including fish & chips, shepherd's pie, and Guinness Irish stew, $12.99–$23.99. Patio dining with a great view of Cincinnati and the Ohio River. Two full bars. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

COCK & BULL ENGLISH PUB, *601 Main St., Covington, (859) 581-4253.* American and English casual dishes including burgers, fish & chips, $7–$15. European beers on tap, full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DC.

MOLLY MALONE'S IRISH PUB, *112 E. Fourth St., Covington, (859) 491-6659.* Irish pub grub with some standouts like traditional Irish stew, $7–$15. Full bar, large choice of draft beers. Three floors of live music, outdoor seating. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

THE PUB AT CRESTVIEW HILLS, *2853 Dixie Hwy., Crestview Hills, (859) 426-7827.* Pub food as well as samples of British cuisine, $15.95–$24.95. Full bar. Carryout. Outdoor dining year-round. Lunch Thurs–Sun, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

NORTH

BRAZENHEAD IRISH PUB, *5650 Tylersville Rd., Mason, (513) 229-0809.* Pub grub including burgers, soups, salads, and fish & chips, $8–$22. Full bar, outdoor dining, carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

THE CLADDAGH IRISH PUB, *in the Deerfield Towne Center, 5075 Deerfield Blvd., Mason, (513) 770-0999.* Irish fare including fish & chips, shepherd's pie, and Guinness Irish stew, $12.99–$23.99. Two full bars. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

DINGLE HOUSE IRISH PUB & GRUB, *9102 Towne Centre Dr., West Chester, (513) 874-PINT.* Kilt-wearing staff serves shepherd's pie, Irish stew, bangers and mash, plus burgers, sandwiches, wraps, pasta, soups, and salads. Under $14. Full bar. Extensive beer list includes dozens of imports. Acoustic music Thurs–Sat. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC

CHINESE

CENTRAL

BLUE GIBBON CHINESE RESTAURANT, *1231 Tennessee Ave., Paddock Hills, (513) 641-4100.* Mostly Cantonese and Szechuan, $6.50–$39.95. Full bar. Reservations for six or more. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MC, V.

CHINA KITCHEN RESTAURANT, *323 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 221-5333.* Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan cuisine. Vegetarian entrées and off-menu requests available, $4–$9.50. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS, DC.

KING WOK, *203 W. McMillan St., Clifton Heights, (513) 723-1999.* Szechuan and Cantonese dishes, $6–$22. Reservations suggested. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

RED PEPPER, *204 W. McMillan St., Clifton Heights, (513) 559-9229.* Szechuan, Hunan, Peking dishes. From $4.95. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

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SHANGHAI MAMA'S, *216 E. Sixth St., downtown, (513) 241-7777.* 1920s style noodle shop open until 3 am Fri & Sat. Noodle bowls, rice bowls, Shanghai flatbread, $5–$10. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

YUM YUM CHINESE RESTAURANT, *909 Race St., downtown, (513) 721-7705.* Szechuan cuisine. Dinner Mon–Sat. Cash.

EAST

CHINA GOURMET, *3340 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 871-6612.* Award-winning Cantonese and Szechuan specialties in contemporary decor. Trout in black bean and garlic sauce, Szechuan string beans, and hot/sour soup, $7–$30. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS, DC.

CHINA ISLAND, *8022 Hosbrook Rd., Kenwood, (513) 745-9922.* Cantonese, Mandarin, and Szechuan dishes, from $4. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

DOODLES, *3443 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 871-7388.* Oodles of noodles and dumplings, including leek pot stickers, seafood noodle bowl, noodles tossed with shrimp, and scallion pancakes, $5–$16. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

DRAGON CITY, *6940 Montgomery Rd., Kenwood, (513) 792-9666.* Chinese menu with numerous Szechuan and Hunan style offerings. Delivery. Dinner seven days. MC, V.

GRAND BUFFET, *3320 Highland Ave., Columbia Twp., (513) 351-3288.* Favorites include spicy mushroom chicken and garlic shrimp, $6.25–$9.75. Lunch and dinner seven days. MC, V.

HONG KONG WOK, *1117 Main St. (Rt. 28), Milford, (513) 576-1388.* Cantonese and Szechuan dishes, $4–$11. Full bar. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner buffets seven days ($5.57, $7.99). MC, V.

MAIN MOON CHINESE BUFFET, *8550 Beechmont Ave., Cherry Grove, (513) 474-6688.* Serves Szechuan, Hunan, and Cantonese dishes. Lunch buffet, $5.25, dinner buffet, $8.45, featuring more than 100 items. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

PEKING GARDEN, *3988 E. Galbraith Rd., Deer Park, (513) 792-0080.* Cantonese, Hunan, Szechuan, $7–$10. General Tso's chicken a specialty. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

RONG TAN'S BISTRO & LOUNGE, *606 Ohio Pke., Withamsville, (513) 752-1907.* Specialty dinners, $8–$16. Lunch buffet $5.25. Dinner buffet $9. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

SUZIE WONG'S, *1544 Madison Rd., Walnut Hills, (513) 751-3333.* Pan-Asian cuisine brought to you by Alex Chin, including Bangkok coconut curry chicken (served in real coconut shells), plus "big bowl soups" like Vietnamese pho with beef, $6.95–$15.95. Large carryout menu. Catering. Large selection for vegetarians. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, dinner Sun. MCC.

WIN WOK, *5250 Beechmont Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 474-9322.* Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan dishes. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

KENTUCKY

CASUAL CHINESE RESTAURANT, *88 Carothers Rd., Newport, (859) 431-2900.* Yes, it's another strip-mall Chinese joint, but the Thai, Hunan, and Szechuan specialties are very tasty, $6–$8, plus chef specials. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

CATHAY KITCHEN, *8049 Connector Dr., Florence, (859) 282-0770.* Szechuan and Cantonese cooking. Duck dishes: crispy aromatic, braised and roasted. Dinner $8.95–$22.95. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CHAN'S ASIAN WOK, *359 Crossroads Dr., Cold Spring, (859) 441-9888.* Chicken teriyaki, Mongolian beef, orange beef, chicken fried rice, $4.95–$6.95. Dine in or carry out. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

DOUBLE DRAGON, *514 Commonwealth Ave., Erlanger, (859) 342-8613.* Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan dishes. $4.50–$11.95. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS, DC.

DYNASTY BUFFET, *4953 Houston Ave., Florence, (859) 283-0788.* Buffet features traditional Chinese cuisine, Japanese sushi, snow crab legs and shrimp, and Mongolian barbecue, $8.99–$10.99. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

ORIENTAL WOK, *317 Buttermilk Pke., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 331-300; 5038 Old Taylor Mill Rd., Taylor Mill, (859) 431-3000.* Classic Chinese fare, specializing in fresh fish dishes. Family style dinners and children's menu available. Piano music Fri & Sat. Lunch Sun–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC.

RAYMOND'S HONG KONG CAFÉ, *11051 Clay Dr., Richwood, (859) 485-2828.* Soft-shell crab, Malaysian-style seafood curry, plus Eastern and Western breakfast and lunch items, $4.50–$22.95. Children's menu. Catering. Carryout and delivery. Breakfast Sat & Sun, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

TOKYO DRAGON, *6831 Alexandria Pike, Alexandria, (859) 635-3666.* Buffet features Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan, plus sushi and hibachi grill. Lunch $7.39, dinner $10.99. Lunch and dinner seven days. DS, MC, V.

NORTH

CHINA EXPRESS, *145 W. Benson Rd., Reading, (513) 948-1626.* Cantonese and Szechuan fare: sesame chicken, shrimp in lobster sauce. Daily specials, children's menu. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MC, V.

CHINESE IMPERIAL INN, *11042 Reading Rd., Sharonville, (513) 563-6888.* Traditional Chinese with an emphasis on seafood, $5–$20. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

GRAND ORIENTAL, *4800 Fields Ertel Rd., Deerfield Twp., (513) 677-3388.* Popular with families. Serves Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan, $7.75–$18.50. Children's menu. Full bar. Dim sum Sat & Sun 10 am–2:30 pm. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

HOUSE OF SUN, *11959 Lebanon Rd., Sharonville, (513) 721-3600.* Specializes in Hunan and Szechuan dishes including Mongolian beef, Szechuan beef, and seafood. Dinners from $7.25. Exotic drinks, extensive wine selection. Reservations suggested. Lunch & dinner seven days. DS, MC, V.

HOUSE OF ZHENG, *11150 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 530-0505.* Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan food. Lunch from $5.18, dinner from $5.98. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

JADE BUFFET, *11499 Princeton Pk., Springdale, (513) 772-6069.* Chinese, Japanese, and American cuisine, $4–$9.25. Carryout, daily all-day buffets. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

JAN'S CHINESE, *10000 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, (513) 891-3100.* A strip-mall gem featuring former Pacific Moon chef H.J. Jan's traditional Chinese fare and Thai specialties, $6.95–$27.95. Dim sum on Sat & Sun. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

JOHNNY CHAN 2, *11296 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 489-2388.* Szechuan, Hunan, and Cantonese cuisine, $6.95–$26.95. Lunch buffet, sushi bar, banquet menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

MOY MOY'S, *9797 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, (513) 792-9779.* Kim Moy offers stir-fries, low-fat entrées, vegetarian items, and daily lunch specials, $5.95–$12. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

SICHUAN BISTRO CHINESE GOURMET, *7888 Mason Montgomery Rd., Mason, (513) 770-3123.* One of the only regional Chinese restaurants to employ the hua jiao, or Sichuan pepper, on such dishes as mapo tofu, "red dry chili chicken," and spicy fish in volcanic chili-laced broth. Under $20. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

SILVER WOK, *9500 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 791-2855.* Cantonese, Hunan and Szechuan dishes, such as garlic beef, Szechuan string beans, sesame chicken, $4.25–$10. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

UNCLE YIP'S SEAFOOD AND DIM SUM, *10736 Reading Rd., Evendale, (513) 733-8484.* Contemporary Asian cuisine, including lobster, steak, salmon, and chicken, $9–$21. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

WIN WOK, *4922 Hunt Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 984-6977.* Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan dishes. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

WEST

CHINA CHEF, *8034 Colerain Ave., Colerain Twp., (513) 522-2212.* Serves Hunan, Mandarin, and Szechuan, $4–$7.50. Lunch specials daily. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

CHUNG CHING, *5842 Hamilton Ave., College Hill, (513) 541-1243.* Hunan, Mandarin, and Szechuan, $5–$8. Beer and wine. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sun. MC, V.

GOLDEN DRAGON, *5818 Cheviot Rd., White Oak, (513) 245-0888.* Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan

[BITES]

EAT THIS

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dishes with dinner special combos, $10 or less. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

GRAND BUFFET, *6421 Glenway Ave., Bridgetown, (513) 598-5183.* Favorites include spicy mushroom chicken and garlic shrimp. Beer, wine & sake. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MC, V.

GRAND CHINA, *6211 Glenway Ave., Westwood, (513) 662-9988.* Specializes in Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan cuisine, $7–$16. Reservations for large parties. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC.

HAPPY GARDEN RESTAURANT, *10557 Harrison Ave., Harrison, (513) 367-9959.* Szechuan, Hunan, and Cantonese. Lunch buffet Mon–Sat ($5.29), dinner buffet seven days ($7.29). MC, V, DS.

LU LU'S ASIAN DINER, *135 W. Kemper Rd., Springdale, (513) 671-4949.* Specializes in Asian noodles: from Hong Kong to Vietnamese, $4.75–$9.75. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. Cash

NEW CHINA GOURMET, *1183 W. Galbraith Rd., College Hill, (513) 729-4197.* Hunan and Szechuan cuisine, plus vegetarian entrées, $7.95–$34.95. Outdoor dining. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

WIN WOK, *5132 Delhi Pike., Delhi, (513) 922-3000; 6153 Glenway Ave., Westwood, (513) 661-8080.* Cantonese, Hunan, and Szechuan dishes. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

WOK & ROLL, *11774 Springfield Pke., Springdale, (513) 671-8338.* Hunan, Szechuan, and some Cantonese dishes, $5.50–$9. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

WOK OF CHINA, *5030 Glencrossing Way, Westwood, (513) 922-2288.* Cantonese, Szechuan, and Hunan specialties. Up to $11. Small size, from $3.75. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MC, V.

COFFEE AND TEA HOUSES

CENTRAL

COFFEE EMPORIUM, *110 E. Central Pkwy., downtown, (513) 651-5483.* Gourmet coffee and teas plus light lunch fare from soup and salad to sandwiches, $2–$7. Children's menu. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MCC, DS.

HIGHLAND COFFEEHOUSE, *2839 Highland Ave., Corryville, (513) 861-4151.* Deli sandwiches, soups, salads, hand-dipped ice cream, and coffee drinks, $2–$7. Full bar. Deck with fireplace. Limited lunch menu seven days. MCC.

IRIS BOOK CAFÉ, *1331 Main St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 381-2665.* Bohemian vibe reminiscent of Kaldi's. Serves soups, salads, sandwiches, Aglamesis ice cream, Essencha teas, and coffee drinks. Under $10. Books, CDs, vinyl records for sale. Free WiFi. Lunch seven days. MC, V.

KOKA COFFEE LOUNGE, *1101 St. Gregory St., Mt. Adams, (513) 381-5652.* Espresso, freshly prepared soups, sandwiches, and salads, $3.50–$8.95. Outdoor seating. Packaged gourmet foods, gifts, and greeting cards. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MCC, DS.

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LOOKOUT JOE COFFEE ROASTERS, *15 W. Seventh St., downtown, (513) 241-0281.* Pastries and espresso drinks, ham & cheese croissants, tuna salad and chicken salad. In-house roasted coffee. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

SITWELLS, *324 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 281-7487.* Classic coffeshop hangout serves soups, sandwiches, salads, and desserts, $3–$7.50. Full bar. Seven days. MC, V.

TAZZA MIA, *441 Vine St., downtown, (513) 381-1388.* Coffee shop and café offers numerous coffee, tea and expresso drinks, plus salads, paninis, sandwiches, and desserts. Under $10. Free coffee refills. WiFi. Carryout. Lunch Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

EAST

AWAKENINGS COFFEE AND WINE, *2734 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 321-2525.* Breakfast, pastries, and expresso drinks, wine bar with wine tastings Wed, Fri–Sun. Open seven days. MCC.

THE BONBONERIE, *2030 Madison Rd., O'Bryonville, (513) 321-3399.* Tea room. Scones, light lunch of soups and sandwiches (tuna, vegetarian on panini). Afternoon tea. Lunch Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

COFFEE EMPORIUM, *3316 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 321-5943.* Gourmet coffee and espresso plus breakfast burritos and sandwiches, $2–$7. Belgian waffle breakfast Sun, $5.95. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MCC, DS.

COFFEE PLEASE, *6930 Miami Ave., Madeira, (513) 271-4700.* Garden burger, chicken and tuna salads, soups, salads, $4–$6. Over 50 types of coffees and espressos, plus scones, mud bars, and cookies. Under $8. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, breakfast & lunch Sun. MC, V, DS.

THE COFFEESHOP ON MADISON, *2030-1 Madison Rd., O'Bryonville, (513) 321-3745.* Hawaiian hazelnut coffee, Zingerman's baked goods, plus breakfast and lunch items including Tom's chicken pot pies and waffles from Taste of Belgium, $2.50–$7.95. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MCC, DS.

ESSENCHA TEAHOUSE AND FINE TEAS, *3212 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 533-4832.* Salads, soups, and sandwiches, gourmet pastries, crepes, scones, and chocolates. More than 80 varieties of loose-leaf teas as well as bubble tea and masala chai. Under $8. European and Asian style afternoon tea service daily (reservations recommended). Breakfast & lunch seven days. MCC.

KOKA COFFEE LOUNGE, *2726 Riverside Dr., Columbia-Tusculum, (513) 321-4200.* Fastest cup of coffee in town for East Side commuters. Coffee and espresso, smoothies, and locally-baked pastries. Breafast Mon–Fri. MCC.

LOOKOUT JOE COFFEE ROASTERS, *3181 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 871-8626.* Pastries and espresso drinks, ham & cheese croissants, tuna salad and chicken salad. In-house roasted coffee. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

MAMMOTH CAFÉ, *515 Monmouth St., Newport, (859) 291-8875.* Comfortable café serves scones, breakfast sandwiches, bagels, plus hot sandwiches for lunch and fresh soups. Under $8. Daily lunch specials. Free WiFi. Acoustic music Fri & Sat. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MC, V, DS.

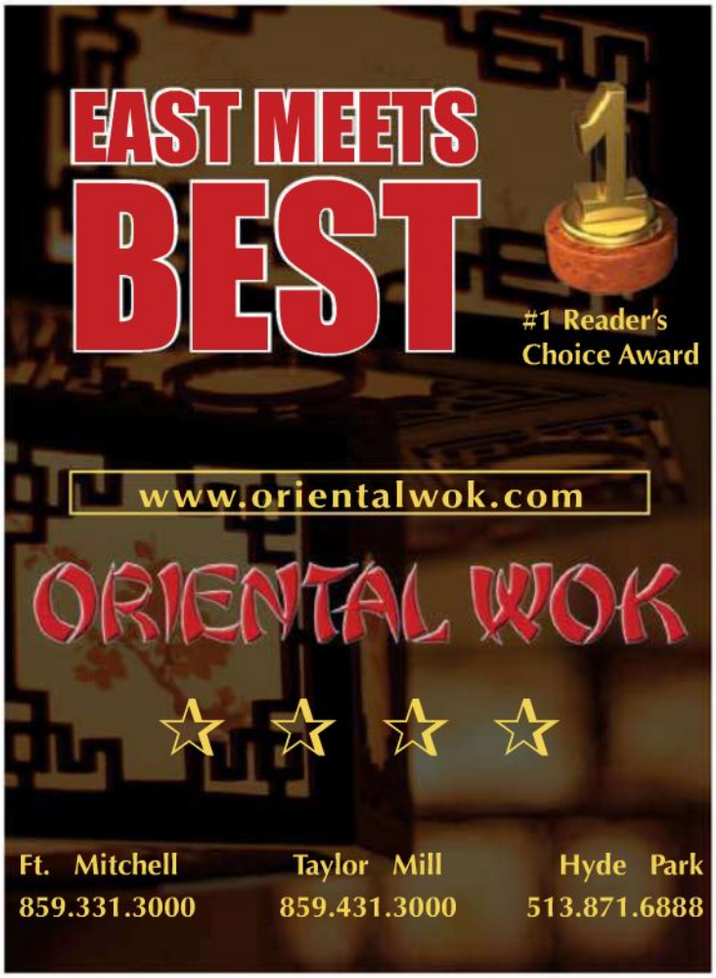
REALITY TUESDAY CAFÉ, *1518 Dixie Hwy., Park Hills, (859) 261-4939.* Breakfast sandwiches, housemade donuts, bagels, salads, grilled sandwiches, pizzas, and fresh soup. Under $7. Custom-made wedding cakes. Catering available. Breakfast, lunch, & dinner seven days. MC, V.

NORTH

ALREDDY COFFEE & CAFÉ, *11083 Reading Rd., Sharonville, (513) 563-4550.* Coffees and teas plus power breakfast hoagies, BLT fritatta, peanut butter granola wrap, around $8. Drive through. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat. MC, V.

COLLEGE HILL COFFEE CO. AND CASUAL GOURMET, *6128 Hamilton Ave., College Hill, (513) 542-2739.* Full espresso and coffee bar with an extensive menu of starters, signature soups and salads, grilled sandwiches, and killer homemade desserts, $3–$9. Large selection of international teas. Live music Sat (www.collegehillcoffeeco.com for schedule). Breakfast, lunch, & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DS.

TAZZA MIA, *9216 Allen Rd., West Chester, (513) 860-4125.* Coffee shop and café offers numerous coffee, tea and expresso drinks, plus salads,



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paninis, sandwiches, and desserts. Under $10. WiFi. Carryout. Lunch Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

WEST

FRONT PORCH COFFEEHOUSE, *5245 Glenway Ave., Price Hill, (513) 471-5282.* Fair trade coffee, a full-service expresso bar, frozen coffee drinks, smoothies, muffins, soup, salads, wraps, and sandwiches, under $10. Live acoustic music Fri & Sat. Full bar. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V, DS.

ZEN AND NOW COFFEEHOUSE, *4453 Bridgetown Rd., Bridgetown, (513) 598-8999.* Espresso drinks and baked goods. Lunch includes homemade panini sandwiches. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V, DS.

ECLECTIC

CENTRAL

ANNABEL'S, *1004 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 417-8669.* Breakfast and lunch spot with a gourmet twist. Breakfast croissants, buttermilk corn cakes, tart du jour with a roasted tomato sauce, large salads, sandwiches, and fresh-made soups. Under $10.50. Lunch & dinner Wed–Sun. MC, V, DS.

BOOTSY'S, PRODUCED BY JEFF RUBY, *631 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 241-0707.* Tapas and sushi, plus whole suckling pig, paella, and duck tacos, $8–$35. Chef's tapas tastings ($45) and wine pairing available. Vegetarian options. Private parties. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

BRONTË BISTRO, *inside Joseph-Beth Booksellers, 2692 Madison Rd., Norwood, (513) 396-8970.* Offers pastas, unique salads, sandwiches, and soups, vegetarian items, daily baked goods, $7–$17, plus desserts and an espresso/wine bar and beer. Children's menu. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, brunch & dinner Sun. MCC, DS.

CAFÉ DE PARIS, *17 Garfield Pl., downtown, (513) 651-1919.* Fresh salads, croissant sandwiches, soups, $1.30–$9.50. Daily specials, catering, carryout. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MC, V.

CAFÉ DE VINE, *309 Vine St., downtown, (513) 241-4448.* Soups, salads, and daily specials. Under $10. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MCC.

CAFÉ MARTIN, *in the Garfield Suites Hotel, 2 Garfield Pl., downtown, (513) 421-2888.* Steaks, seafood, pastas, pizzas, $6–$25. Breakfast buffet on weekends. Full bar. Breakfast, lunch, & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CRICKET LOUNGE, *at the Cincinnatian Hotel, 601 Vine St., downtown, (513) 381-3000.* Salads, sandwiches, and light entrées served all day. Full bar. Lunch, light dinner & late-night fare seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

FRUITIES, *425 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 246-0330.* Light alternatives to fast food include soups, sandwiches, a gourmet salad bar and their signature smoothies, $2.15–$6. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MCC, DS.

GREEN DOG, *3542 Columbia Pkwy., Columbia-Tusculum, (513) 321-8777.* Predominantely locally-sourced food done fast-casual, cafeteria style in a bright urban industrial space, $5–$17. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sat, breakfast & lunch Sun. MC, V.

HAVANA MARTINI CLUB, *441 Vine St., Downtown, (513) 651-2800.* Cuban music and dancing dominate this downtown nightspot. Appetizers include crab cakes, egg rolls, pizza, and chicken popovers $8–$12. Live music. Private parties. Cigar humidor. Dinner seven days. MCC.

THE HIDEAWAY, *4163 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 542-2444.* Brie en crute with pear chutney, wild mushroom risotto cake, beef brisket, and pan-seared salmon with spinach fennel cream sauce, $3–$16.50. Catering, carryout, vegetarian and vegan options available. Dinner Tues–Sat. MC, V.

HONEY, *4034 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 541-4300.* Menu includes homemade creole meatloaf and an array of seasonal dishes and homemade soups, $11–$23. Dinner Tues–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DC.

INGREDIENTS, *in the Westin Hotel, 21 E. Fifth St., downtown, (513) 852-2740.* Gourmet grab-and-go restaurant offers fresh breakfast and lunch selec-

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ITALY

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tions. Lunch items include customized salads, brick oven pizzas, $4–$8. Free WiFi. Breakfast and lunch seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

LAVOMATIC, *1211 Vine St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 621-1999.* Hip, laundry-themed spot dishes up an ever-changing seasonal menu that has included citrus-braised pork belly, Asian flatbread pizza, buffalo meatballs with salsa verde, $13–$19. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Tues–Fri, brunch & dinner Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS, DC.

THE LINDNER CAFÉ AT THE TAFT MUSEUM OF ART, *316 Pike St., downtown, (513) 352-5140.* Soups, salads, sandwiches, hot entrée of the day, $4–$12. Tour & lunch specials available. Reservations recommended. Lunch Tues–Sat. MCC.

MAYBERRY, *915 Vine St., downtown, (513) 381-5999.* "Grassroots American food" by chef Josh Campbell. Tater Tot Casserole, Mayberry burger topped with bacon, onion marmalade, and a poached egg. Sunday brunch features "The Evlis Killer"—waffles with peanut butter mousse, banana, and toasted peanuts. Prix fixe dinner available. Under $25. Bring your own wine or beer. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Fri & Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

MELT, *4165 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 681-6358.* Seasonal menu features local ingredients for sandwiches, soups, and salads, including vegetarian and vegan options, $4–$11. Catering, carryout, children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

MYRA'S DIONYSUS, *121 Calhoun St., Clifton, (513) 961-1578.* International menu includes Middle Eastern, Indonesian, and Cuban specialties with plenty of vegetarian options, $6–$8.50. Eight fresh soups daily. Outdoor dining. Beer and wine. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

ROCK BOTTOM RESTAURANT & BREWERY, *10 Fountain Square, downtown, (513) 621-1588.* Menu features lemon chicken, pastas, pizzas, $9–$19. Children's menu. Full bar features their own handcrafted ales. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

SHADEAU BREADS, *1336 Main St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 665-9270.* Freshly made breads and pastries, plus soups, salads, and sandwiches. Under $6. Mon–Sat. MC, V.

SLIMS, *4046 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 681-6500.* Art gallery-cum-restaurant uses the freshest of ingredients. Multi-course prix fixe menu, $45. Dinner Thurs–Sat. MC, V.

THE SUMMIT, *3520 Central Pkwy, Clifton, (513) 569-4980.* The Midwest Culinary Institute's restaurant training ground for aspiring chefs. The always-changing fine dining menu centers on American cuisine but includes numerous international selections. Reservations accepted. Dinner Thurs–Sat. MCC.

TAKE THE CAKE, *4035 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 241-2772.* Gourmet bakery has become one of the hottest breakfast and lunch spots around, featuring homemade soups, sandwiches, quiches, and salads served in a cheerful semi-industrial room. Under $10. Free WiFi. Lunch Tues–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC.

TOTAL JUICE PLUS, *631 Vine St., downtown, (513) 784-1666.* Wraps, excellent falafel, smoothies, soups, salads, and fruit and vegetable juices. Under $10. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MCC, DS.

WORLD FOOD BAR, *1801 Race St. (at Findlay Market), Over-the-Rhine, (513) 342-1968.* Chef Josh Campbell (who also runs Mayberry) offers up gourmet pre-made lunch items like Vietnamese shredded pork sandwich, coconut curry braised chicken, and pumpkin-crusted tofu. Under $10. Boxed lunches available. Carryout. Lunch Tues–Sun. MCC.

EAST

20 BRIX, *101 Main St., Milford, (513) 831-2749.* A premier wine store, wine bar, and restaurant with over 120 types of wine, most available by the glass. Modern American cuisine with Mediterranean influences; vegetarian options, $21–$35. Full bar. Outdoor dining. Reservations recommended. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

CUMIN, *3520 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 871-8714.* Not your typical curry dishes. Modern, tasty variations of traditional Indian cuisine include roasted duck breast, sea salt rib eye, braised lamb shanks, duck sooley, $7–$25.95. Full bar, late night bar menu on weekends. Seasonal outdoor dining. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DS.

DEMETRIOS IV RESTAURANT, *4002 Plainville Rd., Madison Place, (513) 271-7550.* Chicken, steak, pork chops, chili, soups, gyros, Greek salads, $7–$10. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

HABITS CAFE, *3036 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 631-8367.* Pub setting. Full menu includes chicken wings, ostrich, salads, and their famous potato rags, $9.95–$18.95. Daily specials. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

INDIGO CASUAL GOURMET CAFE, *2637 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 321-9952.* Popular for innovative pizzas, pastas, salads, vegetarian entrées, $10–$18. Outdoor dining in warm weather. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

JEAN PAUL'S PARADISO, *6732 Clough Pke., Anderson Twp., (513) 231-2780.* Everything made from scratch, including pizzas, sandwiches, pastas, soups, and salads, $5–$11. Indoor dining limited. Catering. Large selection of baked goods. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

LATITUDES CAFÉ & BAR, *18 Main St., Milford, (513) 831-9888; 7426 Beechmont Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 233-9888.* Tapas-style menu featuring sautéed mussels, and filet mignon, $3–$11. Full bar, live music Tues–Sat, children's menu, outdoor dining. Dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DC, DS.

MULLIGAN'S HYDE PARK PUB, *2680 Madison Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 871-2337.* Gourmet sandwiches and burgers, $5–$10. Lunch Sat & Sun, dinner seven days. MCC.

NECTAR, *1000 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 929-0525.* Chef/owner Julie Francis's restaurant offers contemporary, seasonal cuisine using local and organic products with a French/Mediterranean flair, $7–$24. Full bar. Reservations recommended. Dinner Wed–Sat. MCC.

THE QUARTER BISTRO, *6904 Wooster Pke., Mariemont, (513) 271-5400.* Creative cuisine such as tuna and smoked scallop "martini" appetizer, plus fresh seafood, steaks, and pasta, $8–$32. Outdoor dining. Full bar. Reservations recommended. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

SALT OF THE EARTH, *4760 Red Bank Expy., Madisonville, (513) 272-3650.* Prepared meals including turkey meatloaf, flank steak, sandwiches, and more. Large selection of vegetarian dishes. Most entrées priced by weight, $7–$12. Dine in or carryout, catering, wine store. Lunch Mon–Sat. MCC.

TELLER'S OF HYDE PARK, *2710 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 321-4721.* Contemporary American menu, including pastas, Pacific Rim and Mediterranean dishes, sandwiches, $11–$30. Children's menu. Outdoor dining. Full bar includes extensive wine list and huge draft beer selection. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sat & Sun. MCC, DS.

WILLIE'S SPORTS CAFE, *8740 Montgomery Rd., Kenwood, (513) 891-2204.* Sports bar serves fresh pastas, fajitas, sandwiches, steaks, wings, $5–$16. Full bar, big screen TVs. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

INDIANA

WHISKY'S, *334 Front St., Lawrenceburg, (812) 537-4239.* Located in an old button factory. Serves steaks, seafood, and smoke-house specialties, including baby-back ribs and rotisserie chicken, plus Jamaican pork/chicken, $10–$20. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

ARGENTINE BEAN BISTRO, *2875 Town Center Blvd., Crestview Hills, (859) 426-1042.* Coffee, wine, and tapas bar. Paninis, salads, empanadas, quiche, and dinner features steak pinwheels, prawns with salsa, baked salmon $5–$12. Full bar, carryout, catering. Live entertainment Wed, Fri & Sat; dance lessons Tues & Thurs. Reservations accepted for six or more. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, seasonal Sun. MCC.

BEEHIVE TAVERN & RESTAURANT, *101 W. Riverside Dr., Augusta, (606) 756-2202.* Diverse menu of regional and international dishes, plus steaks and seafood in a 200-year-old house overlooking the Ohio River, $8.50–$24. Children half price for regular menu. Reservations suggested. Lunch Wed–Sat, dinner Wed–Sun. Cash or check only.

CHALK FOOD + WINE, *318 Greenup St., Covington, (859) 643-1234.* New American cuisine with a seasonal menu and focus on local products from chef Mark Bodenstein, $16–$25. Full bar, top shelf beer and wine list. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

CHEZ NORA, *530 Main St., Covington, (859) 491-8027.* New Orleans jazz vibe in a turn-of-the-century building. Pasta, seafood, steak, and salads, dinner specials, $10–$30. Full bar. Third floor jazz club and rooftop terrace, live music Wed–Sun. Reservations accepted (excluding rooftop terrace). Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

COSMO'S GRILLE & PUB, *604 Main St., Covington, (859) 261-1330.* Trendy pub offers pizzas, chicken wings, and grouper sandwiches, $2.25–$13.25. 100 microbrews and imports. Outdoor dining. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

INDIGO CASUAL GOURMET CAFE, *2053 Dixie Hwy., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 331-4339.* Popular for innova-

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tive pizzas, pastas, salads, vegetarian entrées, $10–$18. Outdoor dining in warm weather. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

KEYSTONE BAR & GRILL, *313 Greenup St., Covington, (859) 261-6777.* Creative bar food: the Duveneck sandwich—potato salad, corned beef, and pastrami on rye—and the Gonzo burger, a 1/4 lb. patty with Gorgonzola cheese, tomato, and artichoke. Plus, they've brought back Inn the Wood's potato crisp! $8–$20. Full bar, outdoor dining. Live music. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

LA CHERIE BAKERY & BISTRO, *522 Main St., Covington, (859) 261-8889.* Breads baked daily. French toast, chicken salad, vegetarian options, fresh-baked pastries, $5–$8. Wedding and specialty cakes, catering. Carryout. Breakfast & lunch Thurs–Sun. MCC.

MOKKA AND THE SUNSET BAR & GRILL, *500 Monmouth St., Newport, (859) 581-3700.* Small cafe featuring soups, sandwiches, appetizers, and entrées, $10–$20. Full bar. Live music on weekends. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MCC.

VIRGILS CAFÉ, *710 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, (859) 491-3287.* Cozy, chef-owned neighborhood café with a full slate of familiar dishes (go for the pastrami sandwich), plus wicked-good, homestyle desserts $9–$20. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon, Wed–Sat. Brunch & dinner Sun. MC, V.

WILLIE'S SPORTS CAFE, *2015 Declaration Dr., Independence, (859) 363-4400; 401 Crescent Ave., Covington, (859) 581-1500.* Sports bar serves fresh pastas, fajitas, sandwiches, steaks, wings, $5–$16. Full bar, big screen TVs. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

NORTH

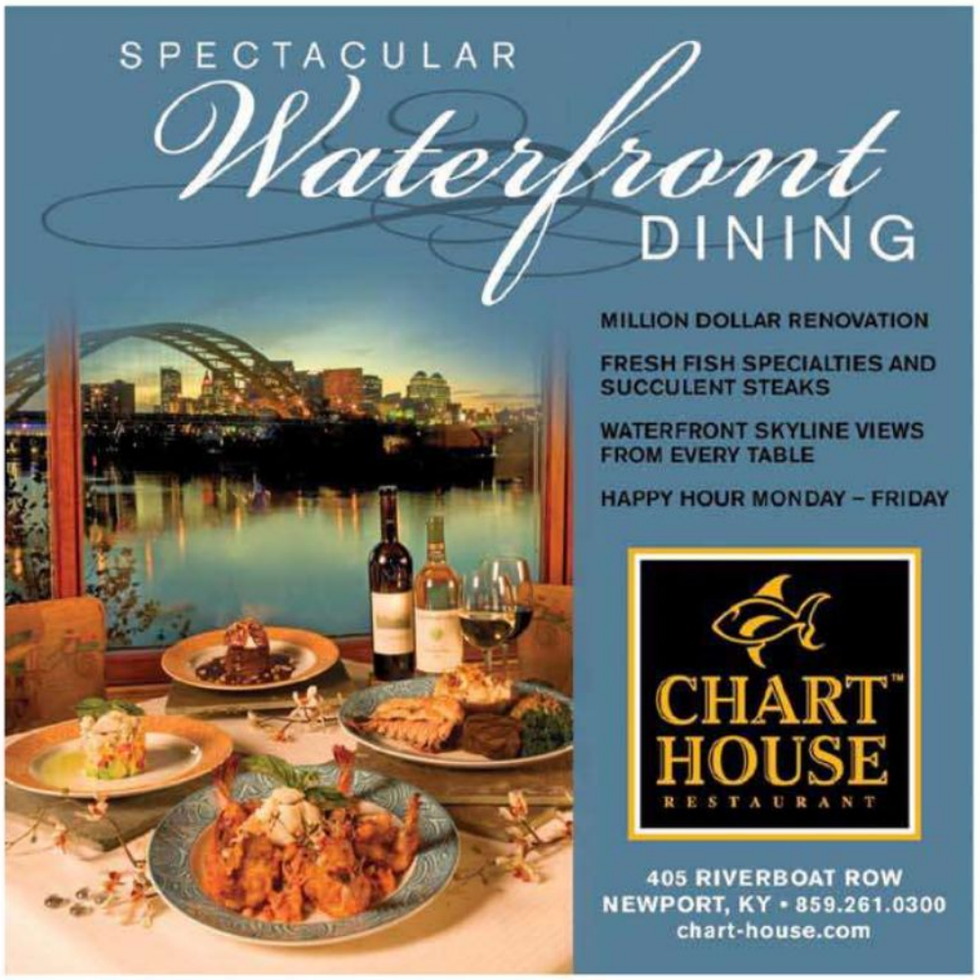
THE BLUE ROOM, *116 E. High St., Oxford, (513) 523-3134.* Real food in a college town: small plates and appetizers including buffalo sliders, and Mediterranean dishes. Full bar. Private parties for up to 130 guests. Club room available for up to 20. Dinner Wed–Sat. MCC, DS.

BRICK STREET, *36 E. High St., Oxford, (513) 523-1335.* Sports bar with 48 TVs. Sanwiches, soups, appetizers, $4–$17.50. Full bar, DJ Thurs–Sat, karaoke Mon, patio dining during warm weather. Lunch & dinner seven days during spring and summer, limited hours during winter. MCC, DS.

THE CASPIAN, *3299 Montgomery Rd., Loveland, (513) 923-1642.* Middle Eastern staples with a Persian twist, like chicken kebabs with roasted tomato over buttery long grain rice. Also, house-made cakes and pasteries, plus rose water ice cream. Entrées $6.45–$14.95. Children's menu. Dinner Tues–Sun, lunch Sat & Sun. MC, V.

CHEF C GOURMET, *4924 Hunt Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 745-0666.* Family friendly restaurant, $8–$22. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

THE COURSEVIEW RESTAURANT, *6042 Fairway Dr., Mason, (513) 573-3321.* Overlooks the couse at the Golf Center at King's Island and offers a variety of entrées, from patio barbecue to seafood, $6–$22. Patio bar. Live music Thurs–Sat in summer. Reservations accepted on weekdays. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.



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DiPAOLO'S, *77 S. Main St., Oxford, (513) 523-1541.* Everything from salads and pastas to smoked salmon risotto, New Zealand rack of lamb, and Louisiana crawfish etouffee, $8–$28. Catering. Lunch buffet Mon–Fri, dinner seven days, brunch Sun, MCC, DS, DC.

HOUSTON INN, *4026 South U.S. 42, Lebanon, (513) 398-7377.* A Lebanon landmark known for its 54-item salad bar, fried chicken, grilled pork chops, prime rib, seafood, and barbecue, $12–$20. Full bar. Children's menu. Reservations. Lunch & dinner Tues–Fri, dinner Sat & Sun. MCC, DS, DC.

LA BODEGA, *11 W. High St., Oxford, (513) 523-1338.* Sandwiches, salads, soups and quiches. Mediterranean entrées include stuffed chicken breasts, wraps, eggplant parmesan, spanakopita. From $6–$10. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

LA COMEDIA DINNER THEATRE, *765 W. Central Ave., Springboro, (800) 677-9505.* Features theme buffet to accompany the theater's current production, $46–$63. Liquor. Reservations suggested. Wed–Sun evening and Wed, Thurs, & Sun matinee. MC, V.

MARX HOT BAGELS, *9701 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 891-5542.* Soups, salads, baked salmon, vegetarian patties, and a variety of bagel sandwiches. Everything kosher. Vegetarian selection. Breakfast, lunch, light dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

THE MELTING POT, *11023 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 530-5501.* Fondue restaurant. Fourteen entrées including lobster, scallops, tuna, shrimp, salmon, filet mignon, vegetable, teriyaki sirloin, cheese fondues. Also, cholcolate fondues and an award winning wine list. Reservations recommended. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

THE PITA PIT, *33 E. High St., Oxford, (513) 523-7482.* Pita sandwiches, salads, breakfast items, $4–$5.95. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. V, MC.

RUE DUMAINE, *1061 Miamisburg-Centerville Rd., Centerville, (937) 610-1061.* Chef Anne Kearney's French influenced Southern American cuisine, including Pernod-laced oysters, gumbo, house-made charcutiere, and chicken paillard, $19–$24. Full bar. Lunch Fri, dinner Tues–Sat. MCC.

SABOR PERUANO, *7105 Dixie Hwy., Fairfield, (513) 860-0349.* Hearty Peruvian flavors like ceviche mixto (seafood marinated in citrus) and chupe de camarones (creamy shrimp soup), $8–$24. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

THE VEG HEAD, *920 Loveland-Madeira Rd., Loveland, (513) 697-7090.* Mostly vegetarian dishes like the popular black bean veggie burger, and sauteed tofu with kale and other goodies. Under $10. Meat dishes cooked on separate grill. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. Cash only.

WILDFLOWER CAFÉ & COFFEEHOUSE, *207 E. Main St., Mason, (513) 492-7514.* Folksy, farm fresh dining built around organic and local food. Everything from salmon sandwiches to burgers to quiche to filet mignon, plus great desserts, $15–$26. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner Thurs–Sat. MC, V.

WILLIE'S SPORTS CAFE, *5054 Glencrossing Way, Westwood, (513) 922-3777; 8188 Princeton-Glendale Rd., West Chester, (513) 860-4243.* Sports bar serves pastas, fajitas, sandwiches, steaks, wings, $5–$16. Full bar, big screen TVs. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

[BITES]

EAT THIS

» Chef Jeremy Luers's saucy little fried egg and pork belly sandwich (with apple-wood smoked bacon, fontina cheese, and a schmear of mayo) rocks our palate. The Rook-wood, (513) 421-5555

WEST

DAVE & BUSTER'S, *11775 Commons Dr., Springdale, (513) 671-5501.* The place for big kids to eat, drink, and play—table shuffleboard to pocket billiards to interactive games. Steak, seafood, pasta, and sandwiches, $5–$19. Two full bars. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

FREDA'S CORNER CAFÉ, *1817 W. Galbraith Rd., North College Hill, (513) 931-3111.* Formerly Kathy's Place, Corner Café serves fresh baked favorites for breakfast and lunch. Homemade chili and meatloaf. Breakfast and lunch seven days, dinner Mon & Tues MCC.

HALF DAY CAFÉ, *1 Wyoming Ave., Wyoming, (513) 821-2323.* Comfy breakfast and lunch spot featuring mango butter rum French toast with applewood smoked bacon, plus chicken and brie quesadilla with pecan and cranberry chutney, $8–$10. Carryout. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat. MCC.

VITOR'S BISTRO, *3156 Harrison Ave., Westwood, (513) 481-5333.* French toast and crepes; roasted red pepper lobster wrap and daily soups. Breakfast & lunch under $5–$13, dinner $5–$35. Nightly wine corking $6. Reservations recommended. Breakfast, lunch, & dinner Wed–Sun. MCC, DS.

FRENCH

CENTRAL

JEANRO BISTRO, *413 Vine St., downtown, (513) 621-1465.* Casual French bistro. Coq au vin, croque monsleur, and daily specials, soups, salads, and sandwiches. Lunch $9–$20, dinner $9–$30. Reservations recommended. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

LA PETITE PIERRE, *7800 Camargo Rd., Madeira, (513) 527-4909.* The daughters of legendary Maisonette chef Pierre Adrian offer Alsatian- and French-based fusion cuisine. Menu changes weekly. Visit www.lapetitepierre.com for openings. Reservations recommended. Dinner Fri & Sat. MCC.

KENTUCKY

GREENUP CAFÉ, *308 Greenup St., Covington, (859) 261-FOOD.* Casual café serving breakfast, lunch, and weekend brunch, featuring breakfast sandwiches, pancakes, house-made pastries, and salads, $4–$10. Seasonal outdoor dining in the garden, wine, champagne, and beer list. Breakfast and dinner Wed–Sun, lunch seven days, brunch Sat & Sun, coffee and pastries seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

NORTH

L'AUBERGE, *4120 Far Hills Ave., Kettering, (937) 299-5536.* Fine European dining. Five-course chef's tasting menu, $55 without wine pairing or à la carte, $18–$30. Full bar. Formal attire required after 5 pm. Reservations recommended. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DC.

LA PETITE FRANCE, *3177 Glendale-Milford Rd., Evendale, (513) 733-8383.* Bistro serves veal sweetbreads in puff pastry and filet mignon with morel sauce, $17–$32; three-course $42; four-course $46. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

GERMAN/ HUNGARIAN

CENTRAL

LENHARDT'S & CHRISTY'S, *151 W. McMillan St., Clifton Heights, (513) 281-3600.* Features German/Hungarian food in former Christian Moerlein estate. Sauerbraten, potato pancakes, and goulash, $10–$14. Outdoor beer garden. Reservations for large parties. Limited menu Mon 4–midnight. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DS.

MECKLENBURG GARDENS, *302 E. University Ave., Corryville, (513) 221-5353.* Schnitzels, sausages, pastas, beer cheese. Plus the famous coffee-toffee black-bottom pecan pie, $12–$22. Full bar features beer garden. Free WiFi. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

EAST

LASZLO'S IRON SKILLET, *6900 Valley Ave., Newtown, (513) 561-6776.* Friendly neighborhood spot features Hungarian specialties: schnitzel, sauerbraten, veal cordon bleu, cabbage rolls. Lunch $3.50–$10, dinner $13–$20. Reservations for five or more. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sun, breakfast Sun. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

HOFBRAUHAUS, *200 E. Third St., Newport, (859) 491-7200.* First American location for the legendary Munich beer hall. Bavarian cuisine, music, and an outdoor beer garden. Children's menu. Reservations accepted except Fri & Sat after 4 pm. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

STRASSE HAUS, *630 Main St., Covington, (859) 261-1199.* German food in a bar setting, $6–$8. Specialties include the Zoomer and sauerkraut balls. Daily specials. Full bar. Beer garden. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

WERTHEIM'S, *514 W. Sixth St., Covington, (859) 261-1233.* German favorites in the heart of MainStrasse Village. Schnitzel, reubens, and potato pancakes, $10–$17. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

WEST

KREIMER'S BIER HAUS WEST, *6052 State Route 128, Miamitown, (513) 353-2168.* Medieval décor within a gingerbread house chalet. The crab legs and tiny little fried rueben sandwiches go well with

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Kreimer's own brand of beer served in massive, two-fisted mugs. Under $20. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

GREEK/ MEDITERRA-NEAN

CENTRAL

CAFÉ MEDITERRANEAN, *7454 Beechmont Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 232-2400.* Very good Turkish, Lebanese, and Greek fare fairly priced. Savory pulled and spiced tandoori lamb, stuffed cabbage rolls, gyros, and a creamy roasted eggplant appetizer. $13–$28. Full bar. Ottoman room. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Sat & Sun. MCC.

CHICAGO GYROS, *200 W. McMillan St., Clifton Heights, (513) 621-3828.* Hamburgers, salads, gyros, under $5. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner Mon–Fri. MCC.

FLOYD'S, *127 Calhoun St., Mt. Auburn, (513) 221-2434.* Owners Emile and Reine Salti offer dolmas, falafel, hummus and tabbouleh. Try the award-winning marinated spit-roasted chicken, $6–$13. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sat. MCC.

MYTHOS RESTAURANT, *410 Vine St., downtown, (513) 381-3601; 100 Fourth St., downtown, (513) 381-3042; 255 E. Fifth St., downtown, (513) 381-5818.* Fast and tasty traditional Greek food, including lamb or chicken gyros, souvlaki, Greek salad, and vegetarian items, $3–$8. Lunch Mon–Fri. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sat at Vine St. location.

PERA MEDITERRANEAN, *1026 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 371-5195.* Mediterranean cuisine on Mt. Lookout Square including falafels, kebabs, and an array of Turkish dishes. Under $20. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

PIZZA PAN CORINTHIAN RESTAURANT, *3253 Jefferson Ave., Clifton, (513) 961-0013.* Features pizza, subs, gyros, chicken wings, Greek specials, $4–$10. Full bar. DJ Fri & Sat. Everything made to order. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

RAYA'S LEBANESE RESTAURANT, *29 E. Court St., downtown, (513) 471-1378.* Owner Sam Raya makes her own baklava from scatch at this Mediterranean fast food spot downtown. Falafal, kebabs, shawarma, plus specials such as kafta, mac louba, and m'shagan. Under $10. Carryout. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

EAST

ANDY'S MEDITERRANEAN GRILLE, *906 Nassau St., Walnut Hills, (513) 281-9791.* Lebanese and other Middle Eastern cuisine like kibbeh, tabbouleh and falafels, shish and lamb kebabs, $15–$33. Two full bars, Lebanese wines and beers. Belly dancing Fri & Sat, DJ on Sat. Weekend reservations recommended. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

CAFÉ MEDITERRANEAN, *7454 Beechmont Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 232-2400.* Turkish and Greek fare including savory pulled and spiced tandoori lamb, stuffed cabbage rolls, gyros, and a creamy roasted eggplant appetizer, $5.95–$26.95. Full bar, ottoman room. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

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KINNERET CAFÉ, *8316 Plainfield Rd., Dillonvale, (513) 791-1777.* Vegetarian Israeli and Mediterranean cuisine, plus salads, sandwiches, and pizza, $3.50–$18.95. Catering. Lunch and dinner Mon–Thurs, dinner Sun. DS, MC, V.

MAMA'S GRILL, *4227 Allstar Dr., Williamsburg, (513) 724-5700.* Greek-influenced menu features more than 200 items, but The Heartstopper stands above all: Garlic fries piled with cheese, bacon bits, red onions, diced tomatoes, peppers, and a side of ranch, $4–$17. Children's menu. Breakfast, lunch, & dinner seven days. MC, V.

KENTUCKY

GREEK TO ME, *3415 Dixie Hwy., Erlanger, (859) 727-3000.* One of the best "fast-gyro" joints in the region. Under $10. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner Fri & Sat May–Aug.

NORTH

ALLADIN'S EATERY, *9344 Union Centre Blvd., West Chester, (513) 874-1302.* Middle Eastern and Mediterranean cuisine including a wide variety of pita rolls, kibbeh shells, lamb dishes, plus salads, soups, and other appetizers. Under $20. Carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

EUROPEAN CAFÉ, *9450 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, (513) 891-4551.* Gyros, souvlaki, and other Greek specialties. Plus soups, salads, and double-deckers. Pastries, gourmet coffees. Children's menu. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, breakfast & lunch Sun. MCC.

THE GOURMET ON BROADWAY, *32 N. Broadway, Lebanon, (513) 933-8377.* Salads, pita sandwiches, homemade desserts, and soups with Mediterranean touches, $4.75–$15. Organic gourmet coffees and teas. Espresso bar. Wine and wine tastings. Lunch Tues–Sat, dinner Thurs–Sat. MC, V.

MIRAGE MEDITERRANEAN RESTAURANT, *at Harper's Station, 11379 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 469-0089.* Mediteranean menu with a Greek influence including the kebabs with chicken or lamb. Offers a variety of vegetarian options. $10–$15. Children's menu, carryout, catering. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. V, MC.

TAZ, *8950 Governors Way, Maineville, (513) 774-7600.* Lebanese and Greek cuisine including lamb bamya, veggie musakaa, seafood, gyros, shawirma fajitas. Under $16. Hookah menu. Catering. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

WEST

QUEEN MARY FAMILY RESTAURANT, *4050 North Bend Rd., Cheviot, (513) 661-8400.* Euro-American menu with some Greek specialties. Serves breakfast, plus housemade sausage, steaks, gyros, goulash, pork, and desserts made from scratch. Under $20. Breakfast, lunch, & dinner seven days. MC, V.

SEBASTIAN'S, *5209 Glenway Ave., Price Hill, (513) 471-2100.* Serves gyros, spanakopita, tiropita, special seasoned fries, Greek salads, $4.25–$7. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. Cash.

SKALLY'S, *1933 W. Galbraith Rd., North College Hill, (513) 931-1412.* International specialties: Greek appetizers, gyros, pizzas, pita sandwiches, falafel, bagel sandwiches, salads, and soups, $5–$10. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri. Cash.

HOME-STYLE

CENTRAL

ANNA'S FAMILY RESTAURANT, *4633 Montgomery Rd., Norwood, (513) 731-1100.* Daily specials, half-pound burger, chili, ham and beef double-decker, $2–$6.50. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days (breakfast served all day). Cash.

BLUE JAY RESTAURANT, *4154 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 541-0847.* Chili parlor and home-style cooking for more than 40 years. Daily specials written on a chalkboard, $8–$13. Carryout, children's menu. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat. MC, V.

CAMP WASHINGTON CHILI, *Colerain Ave. & Hopple St., Camp Washington, (513) 541-0061.* Classic neighborhood chili parlor serves double-deckers, salads, $1.50–$10. Open 24 hours Mon–Sat.

HATHAWAY'S COFFEE SHOP, *Carew Tower Arcade, downtown, (513) 621-1332.* A downtown mainstay, newly remodeled. Serves breakfast all day, plus lunch entrées, sandwiches, salads, soups, $3.50–$7.95. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat. MCC.

MADONNA'S BAR AND GRILL, *11 E. Seventh St., downtown, (513) 621-8838.* Serves chicken breast, wings, hoagies, burgers from $7. Lunch Mon–Fri & late-night dinners seven days. MCC.

MAIN STREET DINER, *900 Main St., downtown, (513) 421-0835.* Double-deckers, cheeseburgers, soups and salads, from $4.50, plus daily specials of beef stew, barbecue on bun, meatloaf, from $4.95. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

O'MALLEY'S IN THE ALLEY, *25 W. Ogden Pl., downtown, (513) 381-3114.* Bar and grill since 1892. Soups, chili, salad plates, sandwiches till 1:30 am. Lunch specials, $4.50, Mon–Fri. Happy hour Mon–Sat 3–7. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

PARK CHILI, *4160 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 541-9902.* Chili, sandwiches, weekend biscuits and gravy, grits. Breakfast & lunch seven days, dinner Mon–Fri. Cash.

PAULA'S CAFÉ, *41 E. Fourth St., downtown, (513) 381-3354.* High-end sandwiches and wraps, pasta, and green salads. Carryout. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MCC, DS.

PLAZA CAFÉ, *One Centennial Plaza, 705 Central Ave., downtown, (513) 241-2582.* American classics including soups, sandwiches, salads, and specials. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MCC.

PROUD ROOSTER, *345 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 281-4965.* Hole-in-the-wall setting. Offers soups, sandwiches, chicken, and roast beef, $4.95–$8.15. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MCC, DS.

QUATMAN CAFÉ, *2434 Quatman Ave., Norwood, (513) 731-4370.* Cheeseburgers, deli sandwiches, soups, barbecue (Wed only), $4.25–$6.19. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, Sun Sept–April. MC, V, DS.

RED FOX GRILL, *232 E. Sixth St., downtown, (513) 621-7924.* Soups and a variety of sandwiches: roast beef, ham, tuna, turkey. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. Cash.

RICHIE'S, *1301 Linn St., West End, (513) 241-1876.* It's all about the chicken here, though they do serve rib tips and an impressive array of sides like candied yams, okra, and (why not) egg rolls, $3.75–$15. Lunch & dinner seven days.

SOPHIA'S DELI & RESTAURANT, *811 Main St., downtown, (513) 723-1055.* Salads, sandwiches, freshly made soups and grilled items: burgers, chicken, goetta, plus daily specials, $3–$7.95. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MC, V, DS.

SUGAR N' SPICE RESTAURANT, *4381 Reading Rd., Paddock Hills, (513) 242-3521.* Since 1940. Breakfast served all day, plus daily lunch specials, $3.75–$10. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MC, V, DS.

TUCKER'S, *1637 Vine St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 721-7123.* Plenty of vegetarian choices in this fantastic home-style diner, including four kinds of veggie burgers, plus omelettes, baked chicken and rice, pork chops, roast beef, fish, $5.50–$9.75. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Sat, brunch Sun. MC, V.

UNCLE WOODY'S PUB & EATERY, *339 Calhoun St., Clifton Heights, (513) 751-2518.* Grilled chicken, steak hoagies, Woody burger, Philly cheesesteak, beef barbecue, and loaded fries, $4.95–$7.95. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri and game day Sat & Sun. MCC, DS.

EAST

CHOO CHOO'S, *7701 Railroad Ave., Madeira, (513) 272-2466.* Filled with railroad memorabilia. Sandwiches, soups, steak, pork loin, fried chicken, meatloaf, $13.95–$21.95. Children's menu. Beer and wine. Reservations accepted. Breakfast Sat & Sun, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

THE ECHO, *3510 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 321-2816.* Low-fat and healthy items, plus daily dinner specials, $9.75–$13.45. Children's menu. Breakfast & lunch seven days, dinner Thurs–Sat. MCC.

HYDE PARK HITCHING POST, *2715 Madison Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 871-9201.* Breakfast, "world's best" fried chicken, and cult-inspiring pies, $4.95–$12.95. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. DS, MC, V.

RASHEEDA'S DELI & CATERING, *6025 Montgomery Rd., Pleasant Ridge, (513) 351-1129.* Soul food including ribs, macaroni and cheese, collard greens, red beans and rice, $8–$10. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun.

SALEM GARDENS, *6396 Salem Rd., Anderson Twp., (513) 231-9666.* Since 1926. Burgers, chicken wings, homemade soups, and huge double-deckers, $1.50–$7.95. Full bar featuring microbrews. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

THE SCHOOLHOUSE RESTAURANT, *8031 Glendale-Milford Rd., Camp Dennison, (513) 831-5753.* Dining room is a classroom, menu chalked on a board. Good and plentiful fried chicken, roast beef, vegetables, salads, desserts. Children under 9

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half price. Entrées $11–$16. Full bar. Lunch Thurs & Fri, dinner Thurs–Sun. MCC, DS.

SILVERTON CAFÉ, *7201 Montgomery Rd., Silverton, (513) 791-2922.* Known for 34 different double-deckers and gyros, $5–$6.99. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

SKY GALLEY, *at Lunken Airport, 262 Wilmer Ave., East End, (513) 871-7400.* Serves casual fare such as salads, sandwiches, spicy steamed shrimp, $6.95–$23.95. Children's menu. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?, *3009 O'Bryon St., O'Bryonville, (513) 321-4404.* Eat in or carry out, this deli serves casseroles, salads, sandwiches, and desserts by the pound, $8–$18. Private and corporate catering available. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri, lunch Sat. MCC.

ZIP'S CAFÉ, *1036 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 871-9876.* Family place with chili, excellent burgers, fries, chicken sandwiches, $7–$12. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

KENTUCKY

ANCHOR GRILL, *438 Pike St., Covington, (859) 431-9498.* Picture Bukowski and Dali opening an all-night greasy spoon. Serves Glier's goetta, chicken, and breakfast all damned day, $4.25–$12.45. Homemade daily specials. Open 24 hours seven days. Cash (ATM inside).

COLONIAL COTTAGE, *3140 Dixie Hwy., Erlanger, (859) 341-4498.* Since 1933. Popular neighborhood spot with fireplace. Serves home-style food, $6.49–$16.99. Children's menu. Reservations accepted for six or more. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

FT. WRIGHT FAMILY RESTAURANT, *1860 Ashwood Circle, Ft. Wright, (859) 331-8359.* Entrées of pork chops, chicken, fish, $5–$9. No alcohol, breakfast menu available all day. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

THE GREEN DERBY, *846 York St., Newport, (859) 431-8740.* Home-style beef liver, lean pork chop, and halibut. Specialty is grilled, baked, fried, or blackened seafood, $8–$15. Plus, Derby salad with hot bacon dressing. Desserts made from scratch. Full bar. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. DS, MC, V.

RIMA'S DINER, *2520 Hazelwood Dr., Crescent Springs, (859) 331-6444.* Home-cooked selections such as catfish, grilled burgers, salads, $6.99–$14.99. Children's menu, Sun brunch is all you can eat for $9.99. Open 365 days a year. Reservations for parties of six or more. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

SPARE TIME GRILL, *7807 Alexandria Pike, Alexandria, (859) 635-5542.* Griddled or fried, from sides to pies, Spare Time offers "comfort food from a happy place," $4–$8. Breakfast & lunch seven days. Cash.

ZAZOU GRILL AND PUB, *502 W. Sixth St., Covington, (859) 261-9111.* Neighborhood eatery with a broad menu of tasty standards: pizza, sandwiches, burgers, pastas, $6–$10. Full bar. Patio dining with skyline view. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

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NORTH

BLUE ASH CHILI RESTAURANT, *9565 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 984-6107; 4200 Aero Dr., Blue Ash, (513) 492-9650.* A 1950s diner featuring double- and triple-decker sandwiches, chili, $1.39–$9. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

BRIDGE HOUSE RESTAURANT, *509 W. Benson St., Reading, (513) 761-8369.* Diner-type food. Deep-fried chicken, chopped sirloin platter, shrimp basket, double-deckers, pork tenderloin, $7.19–$11.19. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MC, V.

CHILI TIME, *4727 Vine St., St. Bernard, (513) 641-1130.* A chili parlor with extensive menu. Home-style breakfast, lunch, and dinner items, including biscuits and gravy, sandwiches, cube steak, popcorn shrimp platters, and, of course, chili, $4–$7. Late-night dining. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days.

FOSTER'S LAKE FOREST RESTAURANT, *4445 Lake Forest Dr., Blue Ash, (513) 769-9108.* Homemade soups, specialty sandwiches, salads, plate lunches, $3.95–$8.95. Catering. Breakfast & lunch Mon–Fri. MCC.

GRAVY, *1513 State Route 28, Loveland, (513) 576-6789.* This place is about the stuff you drown other stuff under, like chicken and dumplings, meatloaf, ham, and real mashed potatoes, $5–$12. Children's menu. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days.

QUATMAN CAFÉ, *224 W. Main St., Mason, (513) 229-0222.* Cheeseburgers, deli sandwiches, soups, barbecue (Wed only), $4.25–$6.19. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, Sun Sept–April. MC, V, DS.

TASTE OF JULIA'S, *6025 Dixie Hwy., Fairfield, (513) 942-1800.* Home-style cooking: baked chicken, mashed potatoes, meatloaf, $6.50–$10. Catering. Lunch & dinner Wed–Sun. MCC.

THE WORKS, *20 Grear Millitzer Ln., Loveland, (513) 697-8408.* Next to the bike path. Pizza and pastas from an open kitchen with a brick oven, $7–$17.99. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

WEST

J & J RESTAURANT, *6159 Glenway Ave., Westwood, (513) 661-2260.* Family restaurant, serving cube steak, cod, shrimp, chili, and big ol' double-deckers. Breakfast (any time), lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. Cash.

PROUD ROOSTER, *5709 Glenway Ave., Western Hills, (513) 451-1142.* American diner offers soups, sandwiches, chicken, and roast beef, $4–$10. Breakfast & lunch seven days. MC, V.

RON'S ROOST, *3853 Race Rd., Bridgetown, (513) 574-0222.* Fried chicken, Oktoberfest sauerbraten and hot bacon slaw, plus steaks, chops, and ribs, $6.99–$15.79. Full bar. Dine in or carryout. Breakfast Sun, lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

STONE'S RESTAURANT, *3605 Harrison Ave., Cheviot, (513) 661-6849.* Small, family run. Chicken & dumplings, pot roast, baked fish, city chicken. Serves steak, barbecue ribs and stuffed chicken breast on weekends. From $6.50. Breakfast, lunch & dinner Tues–Sat. Cash.

CENTRAL

AKASH INDIA, *24. E. Sixth St., downtown, (513) 723-1300.* Specializes in Indian cuisine: tandoori chicken, curries, and vegetable entrées, $9–$13; lunch buffet $8.95. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, dinner Sun. MCC, DS.

AMBAR INDIA, *350 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 281-7000.* Features Northern Indian cuisine, including chicken tandoori, curried and vegetable entrées, $10–$14. Beer and wine. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

AMOL INDIA, *354 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 961-3600.* Northern Indian specialties, including curried dishes, lamb, kebabs, vegetarian entrées, $7–$14; lunch buffet $7.99. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

APNA INDIAN RESTAURANT, *341 Ludlow Ave., Clifton Heights, (513) 861-6800.* Daily lunch and dinner buffets featuring chicken curry, tandoor-oven specialities and meatball curry, $7–$12. Lunch and dinner buffet. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

DUSMESH INDIAN RESTAURANT, *944 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 221-8900.* Huge selection of Indian entrées for very reasonable prices. Under $15. Carryout. Lunch buffet. Lots of vegetarian options. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

EAST

BABA INDIA RESTAURANT, *3120 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 321-1600.* Same menu as Ambar in Clifton, including chicken tandoori, curried and vegetable entrées, $9–$17; lunch buffet $10. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

BOMBAY CITY, *7227 Wooster Pk., Mariemont, (513) 561-0000.* Extensive menu features chicken, lamb, seafood, and vegetarian specialties, including chicken zafarini, scallops vindaloo, and mizoram vegetables, $5.79–$12.99. No liquor license yet, but guests can bring wine. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

GURU INDIA, *2303 Buttermilk Crossing, Crescent Springs, (859) 341-5858.* Sister restaurant to Ambar and Akash serves traditional dishes from Northern India, $10–$20. Daily lunch buffet. Full bar. Private party room. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

NORTH

ANAND INDIA, *10890 Reading Rd., Sharonville, (513) 554-4040.* Northern and Southern Indian cuisine. Lamb, chicken, fish, and vegetarian entrées, plus tandoor-oven dishes, $6.99–$13.99. Lunch buffet $7.99, Sunday dinner buffet $8.99. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

BRIJ MOHAN, *11277 Reading Rd., Sharonville, (513) 769-4549.* Punjabi soul food. Saag, Tarka dal, pani puri served deli style, around $5. House-made Indian pasteries. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DS.

HI BOMBAY!, *4752 Fields Ertel Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 774-9666.* Curries, seafood, lamb, chicken, and vegetarian dishes, $5–$15. Full bar, daily lunch buffet $7.95. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

NEW KRISHNA INDIAN CUISINE, *11974 Lebanon Rd. Suite 100, Sharonville, (513) 769-6266.* Features regional specialties and wide range of spiciness. Favorites are curry-based sauce dishes, tandoori cooking, and mango milkshakes, $10–$14. Daily lunch buffet $7.99, dinner buffett $10.99. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

TANDOOR INDIA RESTAURANT, *8702 Market Place Ln., Montgomery, (513) 793-7484.* Tandoori chicken, boti kabob, samosas, and seafood, $9–$20; lunch buffet $7.50. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

WEST

TAJ MAHAL INDIAN CUISINE, *11778 Springfield Pke., Springdale, (513) 671-3388.* Indian and Indo-Chinese restaurant offers northern and southern Indian dishes, including tandoori chicken, curries, and vegetable dishes. Lunch buffet of 40 items, weekend buffet of more than 60 items. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CENTRAL

BETTA'S ITALIAN OVEN, *3764 Montgomery Rd., Norwood, (513) 631-OVEN (6836).* Will DeLuca branches out from his parents' former Betta's Italian Cuisine in Mt. Lookout. Meat cannelloni, manicotti, cacciatore, chicken cutlet Milanese, $8.50–$14.95. Pizzas and calzones in a wood-fired oven. Children's options. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V.

BIAGIO'S BISTRO, *308 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 861-4777.* Italian dishes, including soups, salads, and homemade pastas, $8–$19. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

BUCA DI BEPPO, *2635 Edmondson Rd., Norwood, (513) 396-POPE.* Family-style Italian, including mozzarella Caprese, chicken Marsala, and fettuccine Alfredo, pizzas, eggplant parmigiana, $10–$20. Full bar. Lunch and dinner seven days. MCC.

CAMPANELLO'S, *414 Central Ave., downtown, (513) 721-9833.* Family owned and operated restaurant. Offers pastas, chicken, fish, and veal Marsala, $8–$20. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MC, V.

MARTINO'S, *2618 Vine St., Corryville, (513) 221-8487.* Italian/American dishes, including pastas, pizzas, steak, sandwiches, $8–$12. Full bar. Extensive sports coverage (especially for Pittsburgh Steelers fans). Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

NICOLA'S RISTORANTE, *1420 Sycamore St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 721-6200.* Northern Italian cuisine in a renovated incline car barn. Diver-caught

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seared scallops spiaggia, goat cheese salad, homemade pastas & breads. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

SCOTTI'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT, *919 Vine St., downtown, (513) 721-9484.* Italian home cooking, including 23 veal and beef dishes, 25 pastas, steaks, osso buco, lasagna, $18.50–$32.50. Beer and wine. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sat. MC, V.

TAVERN ON THE HILL, *1111 St. Gregory St., Mt. Adams, (513) 421-3309.* Fine dining featuring pasta primavera, lasagna, and chicken parmesan, $13–$23. Pre-theater three-course dinner $20. 100 different wines. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

TRATTORIA ROMA, *609 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 723-0220.* Serves authentic antipasti, pasta, beef, chicken, and veal, $8–$25. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat (dinner Sun on days of Aronoff shows). MCC, DS, DC.

VIA VITE, *520 Vine St., on Fountain Square, downtown, (513) 721-8483.* The Pietoso family brings upscale Italian dining to the heart of the city. Try the vecchia Firenze or the braised lamb shank with creamy polenta, $7–$33. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Lunch & dinner seven days. Late-night dining Mon–Sat. MCC.

EAST

BARRESI'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT, *4111 Webster Ave., Deer Park, (513) 793-2540.* Features fresh fish, veal, steak, $20–$40. Extensive wine list. Full bar. Weekend reservations suggested. Dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DC.

BELLA LUNA, *4632 Eastern Ave., Linwood, (513) 871-5862.* Traditional and updated Italian dishes surrounded by fun and quirky decor, $14–$28. Half-price wine night Wed, live entertainment Fri & Sat. Reservations recommended. Dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

BOCA, *3200 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 542-2022.* Two dining rooms offer à la carte menu during the week and a prix fixe menu on the weekend. The focus is on fresh, seasonal ingredients expertly prepared. Full bar. Extensive wine list. Reservations recommended. Dinner Tues–Sat. MCC, DS.

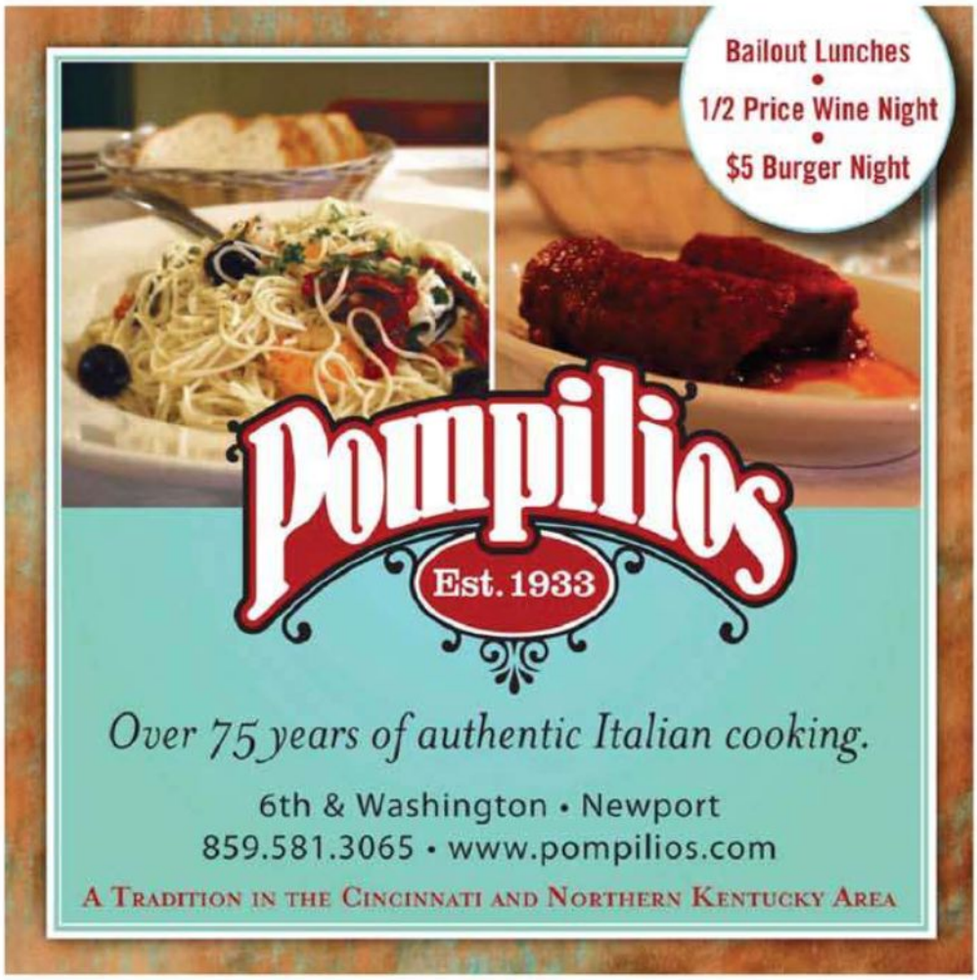
FERRARI'S LITTLE ITALY, *7677 Goff Ter., Madeira, (513) 272-2220.* Family style dining. Seafood canneloni, pesto salmon, spaghetti Mediterranean, eggplant parmesan, $9.50–$29.95. Children's menu, outdoor dining. Full bar. Bakery. Weekend reservations recommended. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

RUSTY'S RISTORANTE, *8028 Blue Ash Rd., Deer Park, (513) 793-6881.* American/Italian dishes, $8–$20. Full bar. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

BRIO TUSCAN GRILLE, *1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 431-0900.* Tuscan-style Italian food, specialty pastas, steaks, and chops, $10–$30. Outdoor dining, valet parking. Full bars inside and outside. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days, brunch Sat & Sun. MCC, DS.

KARLO'S BISTRO ITALIA, *4911 Houston Rd., Florence, (859) 282-8282.* Two spacious dining rooms, nice bar in back. Offers pastas, pizzas, and specialties,



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POMPILIOS, *600 Washington Ave., Newport, (859) 581-3065.* Popular neighborhood restaurant/bar since 1933. Ravioli, lasagna, steaks, seafood, and veal, $8–$13. Full bar. Catering. Patio dining, bocce ball courts. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

VITO'S CAFÉ, *654 Highland Ave., Ft. Thomas, (859) 442-9444.* Local singers perform arias while delivering braised beef short ribs, seafood Diavolo, and veal chop Milanese, $16–$30. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Dinner Wed–Sun. MCC.

NORTH

BRAVO! CUCINA ITALIANA, *5045 Deerfield Blvd., Mason, (513) 234-7900; 9436 Waterfront Dr., West Chester, (513) 759-9398.* Pastas, wood-grilled specialties (chicken, pork chops, salmon), fresh fish, steaks, and chops. Plus wood-fired pizzas, insalata, panini. $10–$23. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

GERMANO'S RESTAURANT, *9415 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, (513) 794-1155.* Fresh seafood, chicken, veal, pasta, $17.95–$38.95. Extensive wine list. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sat. MCC.

MAMA VITA'S, *6405 Branch Hill Guinea Pike, Loveland, (513) 697-9705.* Family owned and operated with great manicotti, pizzas, and other classic Italian pastas. Under $20. Carryout includes "take and bake" items. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

WEST

PRIMAVISTA, *at the Queen's Tower, 810 Matson Pl., Price Hill, (513) 251-6467.* Great view of the city. Entrées include veal, fresh fish, seafood, lamb, steaks, and pastas, $19.99–$36.99. Full bar. Reservations suggested. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

JAPANESE

CENTRAL

KO-SHO JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *4172 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 665-4950.* Chef Yukio serves Japanese dishes, including sushi, sukiyaki, and tempuras in Ko-Sho's new Northside location, $4.50–$26.75. Reservations suggested. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MC, V.

MR. SUSHI, *580 Sixth St., downtown, (513) 827-9345.* Lots of sushi options plus Korean dolsat bi bim bab, tempura dishes, Mr. Sushi Chilean sea bass, surf and turf, $14–$50. Lunch & dinner seven days. Full bar. Carryout. Late night dining on weekends. MC, V, DS.

EAST

DANCING WASABI, *1018 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 533-9218.* Features sushi, sashimi, teriyaki, tempuras, seafood combos, $13–$35. Full bar, half price sushi Mon–Sat 5 pm–2 am. Reservations accepted. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

ICHIBAN JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *1020 Delta Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 321-8686.* French and Asian fusion including sushi and sashimi, tempura, halibut fricasse, grilled duck breast, béchamel shrimp gratin, boneless half chicken asiago, $16–$29. Carryout. Full bar. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

SAKE BOMB, *3672 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 533-0555.* Asian-influenced menu with sushi, rolls, and entrées including chicken teriyaki, $10–$20. Catering available. Reservations accepted. Dinner seven days, food served until 2 am Mon–Sat and until midnight Sun MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

AOI JAPANESE CUISINE, *1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 431-9400.* Regulars include eel nigiri, edamame, and miso soup, $10–$35. Wine list, carryout menu. Reservations recommended. Lunch Tues–Sat, dinner Tues–Sun. MCC.

FUJI STEAK HOUSE, *7687 Mall Rd., Florence, (859) 746-8180.* Japanese steakhouse featuring numerous hibachi tables, private dining, sushi bar, $13.95–$29.95. Full bar, children's menu. Reservations recommended on weekends. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DC, DS.

JO AN JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *3940 Olympic Blvd., Suite 135, Erlanger, (859) 746-2634.* Truly authentic Japanese cuisine: sushi, sashimi, tempuras, yakimonos, $12–$29. Wine and beer, sake. Carryout, cocktails. Reservations suggested. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DC.

MATSUYA JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *7149 Manderlay Dr., Florence, (859) 746-1199.* Sushi bar and tatami room, plus a traditional Japanese menu featuring Japanese noodles, sukiyaki, shabushabu, and donburi, $14–$34. Japanese beer, saki, and wine. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

MIYOSHI JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *8660 Bankers St., Florence, (859) 525-6564.* Impeccably fresh seafood including grilled sea bass marinated in saikyo miso, crisp saltwater eel tempura, and an outstanding selection of sushi and sashimi. Beer and wine. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

NORTH

AKIRA, *7759 Tylersville Rd., West Chester, (513) 755-6800.* Japanese cuisine: tonkatsu, sukiyaki, tempuras, plus noodle dishes and sushi. Dinner entrées $14–$27. Reservations for parties of five or more. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

ANDO JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *5889 Pfeiffer Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 791-8687.* Casual fare featuring sushi, sashimi, noodle bowls, and tempura, $13–$50. Reservations suggested. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri, dinner Sat & Sun. MC, V, DS.

BISTRO GINZA JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *8250 Arbor Square Dr., Mason, (513) 234-0999.* Contemporary Japanese and pan-Asian cuisine with house-made sauces and some of the area's finest sushi, $15–$25. Carryout. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

KYOJIN JAPANESE SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, *12140 Royal Point Dr., Loveland, (513) 683-2628.* An all-you-can-eat Japanese seafood buffet restaurant with two full bars of sushi with more than 50 items. Under $15. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

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KYOTO JAPANESE CUISINE, *12082 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 583-8897.* Sushi, tempura, seafood, grilled steak, chicken, fish, lobster, and a fantastic "sashimi martini" $10–$20. Children's menu, catering available. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

MEI JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *8608 Market Place Ln., Montgomery, (513) 891-6880.* Traditional Japanese dishes including full sushi bar. Sashimi, tempuras, chicken katsu, and noodle bowls, $9–$25. Carryout. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri, diner Sat & Sun. MCC, DS.

SOHO JAPANESE BISTRO, *7655 Voice of America Dr., West Chester, (513) 759-6870.* Upscale Japanese cuisine from chicken teriyaki to filet mignon, $8–$23. Full bar, sushi bar and tatami room. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

TOKYO JAPANESE RESTAURANT, *11481 Chester Rd., Sharonville, (513) 771-4488.* Large sushi bar, tatami room, hibachi, karaoke. Lunch special $6, dinner from $10. Wine & beer, outdoor seating, carryout available. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

KOREAN

CENTRAL

SUNG KOREAN BISTRO, *700 Elm St., downtown, (513) 721-7864.* Contemporary Korean food with a contemporary presentation. Standouts include dolsot bi bim bab (stone bowl) and jab chae: stir-fried sweet potato noodles with squash, carrot, green pepper, onion, and choice of meat, $15–$20. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days.

KENTUCKY

CHUNG KIWHA KOREAN BARBECUE RESTAURANT AND SUSHI, *7800 Commerce Dr., Florence, (859) 525-9978.* All-you-can-eat buffet of Korean specialties such as bulgogi (marinated thin strips of beef), kalbi (beef short ribs), and kimchi, $27.95. A few vegetarian choices and salads. Reservations accepted. Dinner seven days. MCC.

RIVERSIDE KOREAN RESTAURANT, *512 Madison Ave., Covington, (859) 291-1484.* Fine Korean spots serves bulgogi, kimchi, seafood dishes, $15.95–$19.95. Weekend reservations reccomended. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DS.

NORTH

KOREA HOUSE, *11371 Montgomery Rd., Loveland, (513) 469-1637.* Classic Korean cuisine and sushi. Bulgogi, chicken teriyaki, unagi, mae woon tofu bokgum, dolsot bi bim bab, and kimchi fried rice, plus a bounty of sushi options, $9.75–$26. Carryout. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

MOON GARDEN KOREAN & CHINESE RESTAURANT, *20 Donald Dr., Fairfield, (513) 829-7393.* Korean and Chinese cuisine: kalbi, bulgogi, kimchi, $9.95–$15. Beer and wine. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MC, V.

MEXICAN/ SOUTHWEST-ERN

CENTRAL

BURRITO JOE'S, *328 E. Fourth St., downtown, (513) 721-5637.* Combo burritos, taco platters, Joe's salads, rice and bean platter. Up to $7. Lunch Mon–Fri. MCC, DS.

CACTUS PEAR SOUTHWEST BISTRO, *3215 Jefferson Ave., Clifton, (513) 961-7400.* Southwestern cuisine includes red pepper noodles, seven types of fajitas, $8.95–$21.95. Outdoor patio. Reservations recommended for parties of six or more. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri, diner Sat & Sun. MCC, DS.

THE COMET, *4579 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 541-8900.* Bar/restaurant serves giant burritos, quesadillas, and chile con queso, and one hell of a beer selection, $4–$7.25. Tré-cool jukebox. Live music throughout the week, bluegrass on Sundays. Vegetarian options. Dinner seven days. MC, V.

HABAÑERO, *358 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 961-6800.* Specializes in Latin American food. Try the Mad Max fish burrito or calypso chicken with pineapple almond salsa, $3–$8. Children's menu. Beer and wine. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

JAVIER'S MEXICAN RESTAURANT, *800 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 381-EATS (3287).* Excellent Mexican spot downtown, featuring burritos, tacos, tostada salad, and a unique breakfast menu, $4–$6. Full bar, live music. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Wed–Sat, breakfast Mon–Sat. MC, V.

NADA, *600 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 721-6232.* Chef David Falk's contemporary approach to authentic Mexican food. Menu includes Mexican stews, tacos, braised lamb, soups, and salads. Small plates and entrées available, $4–$25. Two full bars. Outdoor patio open in the summer. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

EAST

ACAPULCO, *955 Lila Ave., Camp Dennison, (513) 831-4661.* Mexican fare in family friendly setting. Shrimp, chicken, and steak fajitas, sopapillas, $8–$16. Children's menu, vegetarian options. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

EL COYOTE, *7404 State Rd., Anderson Twp., (513) 232-5757.* Steaks, chops, seafood, and Southwestern entrées, $10–$28.95. Full bar with fresh margaritas, happy hour appetizers. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

RINCON MEXICANO RESTAURANT & CANTINA, *4450 Eastgate Blvd., Summerside, (513) 943-9923.* Authentic Mexican food: fajitas, enchiladas, burritos, and steaks, $8–$20. Children's menu, full bar, daily margarita specials. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

TACO CASA, *3711 Paxton Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 531-8226.* Enchiladas, quesadillas, taco salad, and burritos. Vegetarian menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

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TOSTADO'S GRILL, *3500 Eastern Ave., Columbia-Tusculum, (513) 871-0212.* International cuisine with a Mexican focus, $7–$20. Children's menu, full bar, karaoke every night starting at 9 pm. Reservations for parties of six or more on weekends. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat (Sun for private parties only). MCC, DS.

INDIANA

BUFFALO'S SOUTHWEST CAFÉ, *535 East Eads Pkwy., Greendale, (812) 537-6600.* Southwestern-style fajitas, wraps, steaks, and ribs, $3–$13. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

KENTUCKY

ABUELO'S MEXICAN FOOD EMBASSY, *2833 Dixie Hwy., Crestview Hills, (859) 344-1344.* Traditional Mexican; try the "los majores de la casa," $5.99–$19.99. Full bar, carryout, children's menu, catering. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

CAMINO REAL, *7828 U.S. 42, Florence, (859) 371-2444.* Family owned. Menu offers burritos, fajitas, chimichangas, enchiladas from $7.75 Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

EL RIO GRANDE MEXICAN RESTAURANT, *34 Carothers Rd., Newport, (859) 292-8750.* Large portions of enchiladas, taquitos, burritos, and specials in a family friendly setting, $6.99–$11.25. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

HABAÑERO, *1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 291-6222.* Specializes in Latin American food. Try the Mad Max fish burrito or calypso chicken with pineapple almond salsa, $3–$8. Children's menu. Beer and wine. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

LA MEXICANA, *642 Monmouth St., Newport, (859) 261-6112.* Tacos, burritos, and more in this restaurant/grocery. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

MIDWAY CAFÉ, *1017 S. Ft. Thomas Ave., Ft. Thomas, (859) 781-7666.* Mexican and American in an historic café built in 1894. Thursday is 99-cent taco night. Specializing in steaks, quesadillas, handmade margaritas. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

MONTOYAS MEXICAN RESTAURANT, *2507 Chelsea Dr., Ft. Mitchell, (859) 341-0707.* Serving authentic Mexican food for more than 20 years, $6–$11. Full bar, carryout. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. V, MC, DS.

TAQUERIA CRUZ, *518 Pike St., Covington, (859) 431-3859.* Perhaps the only local taqueria that serves huaraches (spelled guarachis here)—a flat trough of thick, handmade fried masa dough mounded with beans and slivers of grilled beef or sausage, shredded lettuce, queso fresco, and cultured cream. Plus stews, carne asada plates, and flautas. Under $10. Lunch seven days. Cash.

NORTH

ABUELO'S MEXICAN FOOD EMBASSY, *2833 Dixie Hwy., Crestview Hills, (859) 344-1344.* Traditional Mexican; try the "los majores de la casa," $5.99–$19.99. Full bar, carryout, children's menu, catering. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

ACAPULCO, *5010 Deerfield Blvd., Mason, (513) 336-7449.* Mexican fare in family friendly setting. Shrimp, chicken, and steak fajitas, sopapillas, $8–$16. Children's menu, vegetarian options. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

CACTUS PEAR SOUTHWEST BISTRO, *9500 Kenwood Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 791-4424.* Southwestern cuisine includes red pepper noodles, seven types of fajitas, $8.95–$21.95. Reservations recommended for parties of six or more. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri, diner Sat & Sun. MCC.

CANCUN MEXICAN RESTAURANT, *11930 Hamilton Ave., Pleasant Run, (513) 851-6310.* Friendly staff offers generous portions. Chimichangas, carne asada, chicken flautas, $7.25–$16. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days.

CASA TEQUILA, *8111 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd., West Chester, (513) 777-9424.* Specializes in chicken with mole sauce, chorizos, and pollo con crema, $4.95–$13.95. Full bar, kids eat free on Sun. Lunch Tues–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

EL RANCHO GRANDE, *11765 Lebanon Rd., Sharonville, (513) 733-1310.* Authentic Mexican dishes, including burritos, chimichangas, fajitas, quesadillas, $6.95–$11. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

FIESTA BRAVA, *2912 W. U.S. Rte. 22, Landen, (513) 697-8300.* Steak ranchero, carne asada, mole ranchero, and fajitas. Full bar with plenty of Mexican beers. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS, DC.

TACO CASA, *11309 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 891-8333.* Enchiladas, quesadillas, taco salad, and burritos. Vegetarian menu. Beer. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

TAQUERIA MERCADO, *6507 Dixie Hwy., Fairfield, (513) 942-4943.* Freshly prepared, authentic Mexican fare, including tacos and burritos, fajitas, and tortas made with homemade bread from the restaurant's next-door bakery, $1.95–$10.49. Full bar, specialty drinks. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

WEST

CANCUN MEXICAN RESTAURANT, *in Western Bowl, 6383 Glenway Ave., Western Hills, (513) 574-1639.* Friendly staff offers generous portions. Chimichangas, carne asada, chicken flautas, $7.25–$16. Children's menu. Full bar. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

XOCHIMILCO, *3547 Springdale Rd., Bevis, (513) 923-2733.* Authentic Mexican food. Happy hour drink specials on Wednesdays. Buy one meal get one free on Thursday. Kids eat free on Sunday. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

[BITES]

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PIZZA

CENTRAL

ADRIATICO'S NEW YORK STYLE PIZZA, *3205 Jefferson Ave., Clifton, (513) 281-4344.* Subs, salads, calzones, pasta, and some damn fine pizza. Under $25. Delivery available. Open late on weekends. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V.

DEWEY'S PIZZA, *265 Hosea Ave., Clifton, (513) 221-0400.* Try the Green Lantern pizza with minced garlic, artichokes, mushrooms, pesto and goat cheese. Wines and microbrews, $4.95–$19.95. Reservations after 5 pm for six or more. No weekend reservations. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, dinner Sun. MCC.

LUCY BLUE PIZZA, *1128 Walnut St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 241-8350.* Late night pizza window serving dozens of specialty pizzas. Cheese and pepperoni available by the slice. Tues & Thurs pizza buffet lunch. Lunch Wed–Fri, dinner Wed–Sat (until 3 am). MCC.

POMODORI'S PIZZERIA & TRATTORIA, *121 W. McMillan St., Clifton Heights, (513) 861-0080.* Pizzas from wood-fired Italian oven, including deep-dish and Sicilian pizzas, sandwiches, salads, pastas, $3.50–$20. Beer and wines by the glass or bottle. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

PORTOFINO PIZZA & DELI, *1609 Chase Ave., Northside, (513) 542-5858.* Greek and Italian restaurant serves New York–style pizza, gyros, and oven-baked fries. Offers turkey-based and vegetarian items, $4.25–$21. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

ZZ'S PIZZA COMPANY, *2401 Gilbert Ave., Walnut Hills, (513) 961-3456.* Gourmet pizzas, including seafood and shiitake mushroom, plus lasagna, and a tasty white Italian bean soup, $8–$23.50. Carrout. Bring your own wine/beer. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

EAST

DEWEY'S PIZZA, *3014 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 731-7755; 7767 Kenwood Rd., Kenwood, (513) 791-1616.* Try the Green Lantern pizza with minced garlic, artichokes, mushrooms, pesto and goat cheese. Also calzones, salads, and a selection of wines and microbrews, $4.95–$19.95. Reservations after 5 pm for six or more. No weekend reservations. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, dinner Sun. MCC.

KRIMMER'S ITALIANETTE PIZZA, *6918 Plainfield Rd., Silverton, (513) 791-7650.* Pizza, pasta, hoagies, salads, $6–$25. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

LUCY BLUE PIZZA, *3200 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 321-2540.* A dozen specialty pizzas by the pie or cheese and pepperoni by the slice. All pizzas $12, all slices $2. Plus homemade soups and salads. Late night window open until 3 am. Lunch Wed–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC.

RAMUNDO'S PIZZERIA & DELI, *3166 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 321-0978.* Pizza, hoagies, calzones, deli sandwiches, $5.99–$22.99. Carryout. Open till 4 am Fri & Sat. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

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UNO CHICAGO GRILL, *7578 Beechmont Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 231-5357.* Chicago-style deep-dish pizza heads up a full menu of steaks, burgers, and salads, $7.95–$20. More than 100 beers. Dine in and carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

KENTUCKY

DEWEY'S PIZZA, *1 Levee Way, Suite 3100, Newport, (859) 431-9700.* Try the Green Lantern pizza with minced garlic, artichokes, mushrooms, pesto and goat cheese. Also calzones, salads, and a selection of wines and microbrews, $4.95–$19.95. Reservations after 5 pm for six or more. No weekend reservations. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

LUCY BLUE PIZZA, *611 Main St., Covington, (859) 581-3555.* A dozen specialty pizzas by the pie or cheese and pepperoni by the slice. All pizzas $12, all slices $2. Plus homemade soups and salads. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

NEWPORT PIZZA COMPANY, *601 Monmouth St., Newport, (859) 261-4900.* Traditional and specialty pizzas (try The Zeus: fresh baby spinach, feta cheese, Roma tomatoes, roasted garlic, olive oil, and asiago cheese), plus soups, salads, hoagies, appetizers, desserts, and a large selection of craft and import beers, $7.75–$17.75. Carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

NORTH

APONTE'S PIZZERIA & FAMILY RESTAURANT, *753 Reading Rd., Mason, (513) 336-7400.* Jersey-style pizza: big, crisp, microfine crust under a tangy layer of sauce and whole-milk cheese. Under $14. Full bar. Delivery available. Lunch & dinner seven days MCC, DS.

DEWEY'S PIZZA, *11338 Montgomery Rd., Symmes Twp., (513) 247-9955.* Try the Green Lantern pizza with minced garlic, artichokes, mushrooms, pesto and goat cheese. Also calzones, salads, and a selection of wines and microbrews, $4.95–$19.95. Reservations after 5 pm for six or more. No weekend reservations. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat, dinner Sun. MCC.

FRATELLI'S NEW YORK STYLE PIZZERIA, *6890 Tylersville Rd., West Chester, (513) 777-5061.* Thin crust pizza with a few NewYork–themed specialty options (the Madison Square Garden, the New Yorker), plus calzones, sandwiches, pasta options, and appetizers, $6.25–$18.95. Carryout. Delivery. Lunch & dinner Tues–Sun. MC, V.

POMODORI'S PIZZERIA & TRATTORIA, *7880 Remington Rd., Montgomery, (513) 794-0080.* Pizzas from wood-fired Italian oven, including deep-dish and Sicilian pizzas, sandwiches, salads, pastas, $3.50–$20. Beer and wines by the glass or bottle. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

ROC-A-FELLAS, *11055 Reading Rd., Sharonville, (513) 769-3128.* Try the New York–style thin crust and double crusted "Bronx Bomber" pizzas, $2.75–$25.99. Carryout. Delivery available. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

UNO CHICAGO GRILL, *9246 Schulze Dr., West Chester, (513) 942-6646.* Chicago-style deep-dish pizza heads up a full menu of steaks, burgers, and salads, $7.95–$20. More than 100 beers. Dine in and carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

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WEST

LaROSA'S, *2411 Boudinot Ave., Westwood, (513) 347-1111 (Batesville, Indiana, or Dayton area call 877-347-1111).* More than 50 locations. More than 40 items available for delivery. Order online at www.larosas.com for pick up or delivery from any pizzeria. Click "Pizzeria Locator" for locations. $6–$17. MCC.

TROTTA'S PIZZA AND DRIVE-THRU, *3501 Werk Rd., Westwood, (513) 451-5555.* Generously-topped pizzas, hoagies, and salads delivered to your car or home, $5–$32. Delivery after 4 pm, carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

SEAFOOD

CENTRAL

McCORMICK & SCHMICK'S SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, *in the Westin Hotel, 21 E. Fifth St., downtown, (513) 721-9339.* At least 30 seafood selections daily, including Jake's étouffée, tortilla-crusted mahi mahi with spicy gazpacho, and Atlantic salmon stuffed with blue crab, bay shrimp, and brie cheese, $18–$32. Full bar features specialty cocktails, appetizers. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days (Sat lunch features dinner menu). MCC, DC, DS.

MT. ADAMS FISH HOUSE, *940 Pavilion St., Mt. Adams, (513) 421-3250.* Featuring fresh seafood, a sushi bar, and daily specials. Best bets are tuna, planked salmon, and sushi. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

EAST

BELUGA, *3520 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 533-4444.* Features an eclectic menu with such entrées as Asian pork tenderloin, rack of lamb, $15–$32. Plus a traditional sushi bar. Full bar. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

FOUR SEASONS RESTAURANT, *4609 Kellogg Ave., Columbia-Tusculum, (513) 871-1820.* Floating restaurant serves fresh seafood in nautical decor. Barbecued ribs, steaks, chicken, $13–$29. Popular seafood buffet Fri & Sat. Open seasonally (April–Oct). Full bar. Reservations accepted. Dinner Tues–Sun. MCC, DC, DS.

PELICAN'S REEF, *7261 Beechmont Ave., Anderson Twp., (513) 232-2526.* Raw bar. Plus oysters, steamed pots, conch fritters, king crab, mussels marinara, and mesquite-grilled grouper, $6–$15. Children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

KENTUCKY

CHART HOUSE, *405 Riverboat Row, Newport, (859) 261-0300.* Great river view. Menu favorites include New England-style clam chowder, prime rib, and Australian lobster, $18.99–$42.99. Full bar. Children's options. Reservations suggested. Dinner seven days. MCC.

WEST

CENTURY INN, *10675 Springfield Pke., Woodlawn, (513) 771-4816.* Established in 1806. Casual. Serves jack salmon, shrimp basket, tilapia sandwiches, $10–$20. Full bar, children's menu. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

STEAKS

CENTRAL

BOI NA BRAZA BRAZILIAN STEAK HOUSE, *441 Vine St., downtown, (513) 421-7111.* All-you-can-eat large salad bar, 15 varieties of fire-roasted meat including, pork, lamb, steak, sausage, and chicken—all hand-sliced at your table by gauchos. Lunch $29.99, dinner $47.50. Full bar. Brazilian wines and desserts. Reservations recommended. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

JEFF RUBY'S, *700 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 784-1200.* Dry-aged steaks, live Maine lobsters, seafood, $24–$56. Valet parking, cigar menu, full bar, year-round outdoor patio. Reservations recommended. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

MORTON'S, THE STEAKHOUSE, *441 Vine St., Suite 2A, downtown, (513) 621-3111.* Overlooks Fountain Square. Steaks from 8-ounce filet to 24-ounce porterhouse, plus filet Oscar, shrimp, $37.50–$97.

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Valet parking. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Dinner seven days. MCC.

EAST

JEFF RUBY'S PRECINCT, *311 Delta Ave., Columbia-Tusculum, (513) 321-5454.* Jeff Ruby's original steakhouse. Prime steaks and seafood entrées, $25.75–$41.50. Full bar features extensive wine list. Reservations suggested. Dinner seven days. MCC.

KENTUCKY

JEFF RUBY'S WATERFRONT, *14 Pete Rose Pier, Covington, (859) 581-1414.* Upscale steakhouse and entertainment complex. Also features seafood and an elaborate raw bar and fresh sushi made by master chef, $19–$48. Full bar, piano lounge, live entertainment Tues–Sat. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

JOHN PHILIP'S RESTAURANT AND BAR, *2809 Dixie Hwy., Crestview Hills, (859) 344-0444.* Bang for the buck steakhouse also serves seafood, pasta, $8.99–$29.99. Full bar. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

NORTH

EDDIE MERLOT'S, *10808 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, (513) 489-1212.* Upscale steakhouse serves all prime beef including 30-day dry-aged 22-ounce rib eye, among other top shelf cuts, plus seafood, $8.95–$54.95. Full bar, extensive wine list. Dinner seven days. MCC.

GUENTHER'S STEAK & SEAFOOD HOUSE, *7886 Cincinnati-Dayton Rd., West Chester, (513) 777-8880.* Premium steaks, fresh seafood, flambéed desserts, and daily specials, $10–$29. Liquor and extensive wine list. Dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

JAG'S STEAK & SEAFOOD, *5980 West Chester Rd., West Chester, (513) 860-5353.* Fresh raw bar, large selection of seafood and steak items, $19.95–$53.95. Three full bars, nightly entertainment, piano lounge, seven separate dining rooms. Fri & Sat adult dance club. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

JEFF RUBY'S CARLO & JOHNNY, *9769 Montgomery Rd., Montgomery, (513) 936-8600.* Jeff Ruby's celebrity haunt in an elaborate 1930s supper club setting. Seafood, USDA prime steaks, and sushi bar, $21–$90. Live music Tues–Sat, full bar. Dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

PARKERS BLUE ASH GRILL, *4200 Cooper Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 891-8300.* Fine steak house also features cedar-planked salmon, prime rib, $10–$38. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days, Champagne brunch Sun. MCC, DS.

THE PINE CLUB, *1926 Brown St., Dayton, Ohio, (937) 228-5371.* Since 1947, a Dayton tradition. Old-school steakhouse serving filet, strip-loin, prime rib, plus lamb, veal, liver and onions, and seafood. $16.95–$59.95. The only vegetarian options are sides. Reservations not accepted. Dinner Mon–Sat. Cash, check, or Pine Club house account only.

WEST

JIM & JACK'S ON THE RIVER, *3456 River Rd. (US Route 50), Riverside, (513) 251-7977.* Bar/restaurant serves ribs, steaks, chicken, $7.95–$15.95. Live oldies for weekend entertainment. Breakfast, lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

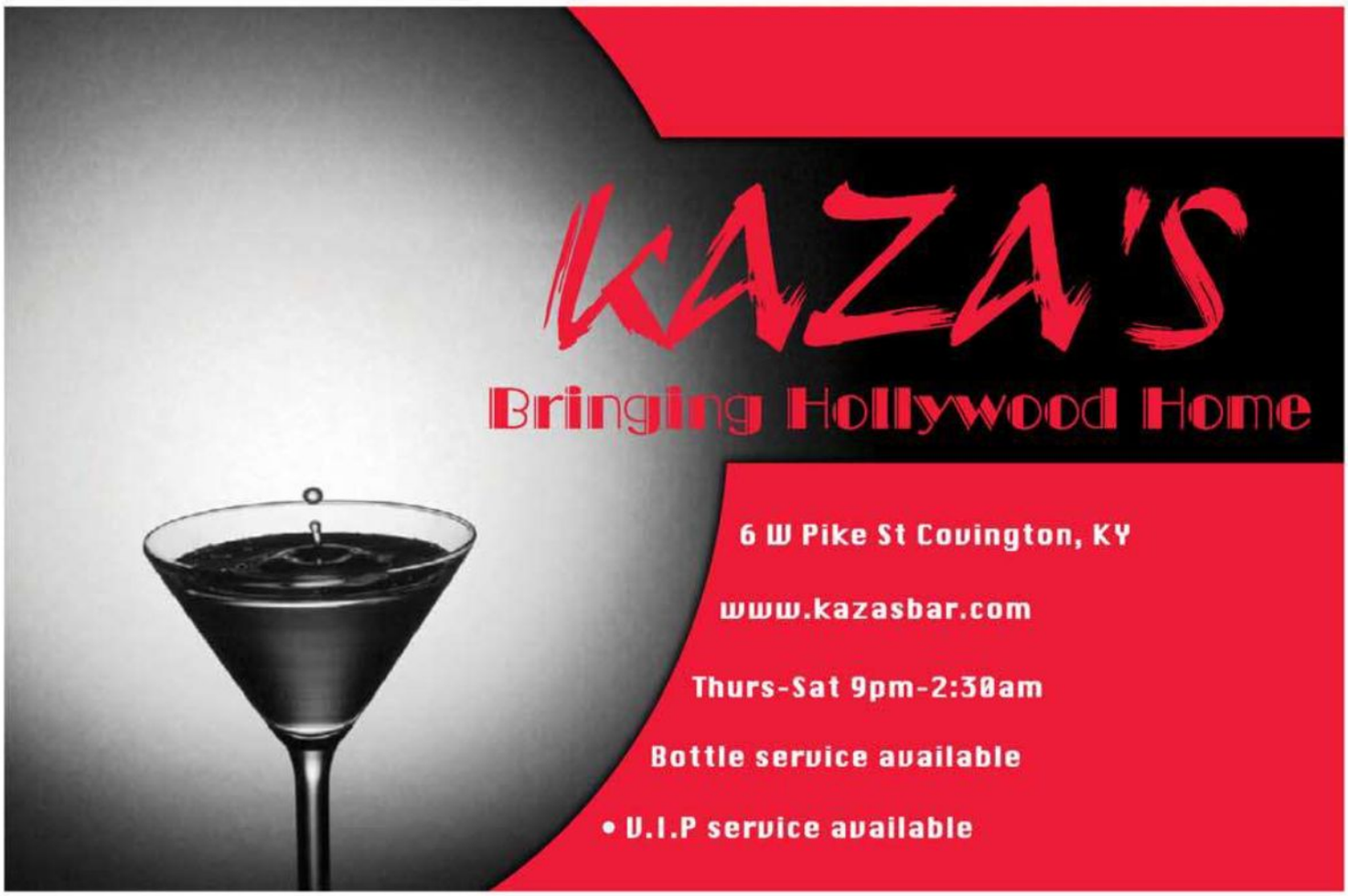
KENNING'S CIRCLE K, *6166 Bridgetown Rd., Mack, (513) 574-5613.* Sandwiches, steaks, prime rib, barbecued loin-back ribs and seafood, $7.99–$23.99. Early bird specials 4–6 pm. Children's menu. Reservations for four or more. Dinner seven days. MCC.

MAURY'S TINY COVE, *3908 Harrison Ave., Cheviot, (513) 662-2683.* A west side mainstay popular for steaks, barbecued ribs, prime rib, seafood, and sandwiches, $7–$25.95. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DC, DS.

THAI

CENTRAL

BANGKOK EXPRESS, *12 W. Court St., downtown, (513) 381-2100.* Authentically prepared Thai cuisine including soft shell crab curry, crispy duck, pad Thai, pho, and drunken noodle, $8.95–$13.95. Carryout. Many vegetarian options. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V.



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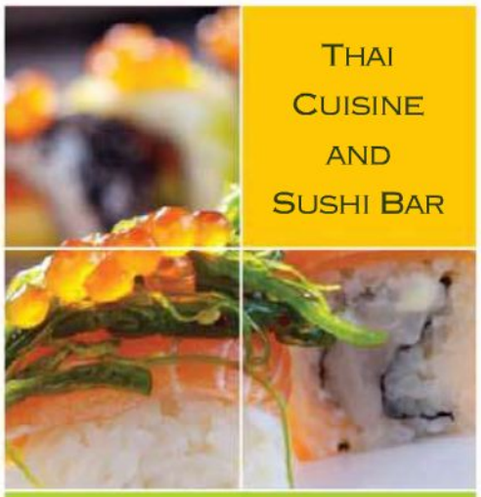

TEAK THAI CUISINE & SUSHI BAR, *1049 St. Gregory St., Mt. Adams, (513) 665-9800.* Soups, fried rice, chicken and beef curries, noodle dishes, $9.95–$24. Sushi bar, patio dining during the summer. Full bar. Reservations for parties of four or more. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS, DC.

THAI CAFÉ, *316 Ludlow Ave., Clifton, (513) 961-5678.* Pad Thai, satays, noodles, and curries, plus vegetarian entrées, $9.95–$19.95. Reservations recommended. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MC, V.

THAI EXPRESS, *213 W. McMillan St., Clifton Heights, (513) 651-9000.* Fast and delicious Thai carryout including Thai salads, holy basil stir fry, three-flavor tofu, curries, and killer pad Thai. Under $10. Lots of vegetarian options. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. Cash or check only.

EAST

AMARIN, *7022 Miami Ave., Madeira, (513) 272-6900.* Variety of Thai dishes, sushi bar, $9.95–$18.95. Patio. Full bar. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MC, V.

ASIANA, *3922 Edwards Rd., Oakley, (513) 351-0999.* Great pad Thai, pad woo sen, curries. Under $10. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

BAN THAI, *792 Eastgate S. Dr., Anderson Twp., (513) 752-3200.* Satays, curries, sushi, fish cakes, and plenty of traditional dishes, $9–$15. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC.

BANGKOK BISTRO, *3506 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 871-0707.* Pad Thai, seafood choo chee, beef Massaman curry, plus a sushi bar, $11–$16, lunch specials $7–$10. Patio dining. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MC, V.

GREEN PAPAYA, *2942 Wasson Rd., Oakley, (513) 731-0107.* Fantastic sushi (try the Green Papaya rolls), curries, and classic Thai specials. $10–$16. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

LEMON GRASS THAI CUISINE, *2666 Madison Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 321-2882.* Chicken curry, pad Thai, satays, seafood basil, fresh vegetarian items, $9–$14. Beer and wine. Reservations suggested. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. V, MC, DS.

MEKONG THAI CUISINE, *7687 Montgomery Rd., Kenwood, (513) 791-7565.* Authentic Thai and Laotian cuisine, $5.95–$12. Carryout. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC.

RUTHAI'S THAI KITCHEN, *3162 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 871-7687.* Dine in or carryout. Thai favorites like green papaya salad, summer rolls, pad see ew, seafood curry, and sushi bar, $7.95–$17.95. Reservations accepted. Lunch Tues–Fri, dinner Tues–Sat. V, MC, DS.

WILD GINGER, *3655 Edwards Rd., Hyde Park, (513) 533-9500.* Features Thai food and some Vietnamese dishes including pho and summer rolls, plus sushi bar. Carryout. Hibachi grill. Lunch & dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

KENTUCKY

SIAM ORCHID, *511 Fairfield Ave., Bellevue, (859) 694-7700.* Thai menu includes chicken satay, red curry, and pad Thai, $8–$16. Reservations accepted. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS.

SWEET BASIL, *2331 Buttermilk Crossing, Crescent Springs, (859) 331-0666.* Traditional Thai curries and basil sauces, plus an assortment of sushi and sushi combos, $5.95–$17.95. Carrout. Full bar. Lunch Mon–Sat, dinner seven days. MCC.

NORTH

APSARA, *4785 Lakeforest Dr., Blue Ash, (513) 554-1040.* Asian fusion restaurant serving Thai, Vietnamese, and sushi, $10–$25. Private dining rooms available. Extensive wine list. Reservations recommended. Lunch & dinner Mon–Fri. MCC, DS.

ARLOI DEE, *4920 Socialville Foster Rd., Mason, (513) 229-3997.* Serves Thai and sushi. Pad Thai, lobster, fish, and seafood combo, a variety of curries, $8.95–$32.95. Full bar, patio dining. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner seven days. MCC, DS.

BANGKOK EXPRESS, *11418 Montgomery Rd., Loveland, (513) 530-0111.* Authentically prepared Thai cuisine including soft shell crab curry, crispy duck, pad Thai, pho, and drunken noodle, $8.95–$13.95. Carryout. Many vegetarian options. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V.

SUKHOTHAI THAI CUISINE, *8102 Market Place Ln., Montgomery, (513) 794-0057.* Spicy entrées—massaman curry, broiled seafood, pad Thai—plus plenty of noodles, curry, and vegetarian entrées, $10.95–$17.95. Beer and wine. Reservations accepted. Lunch Mon–Fri, dinner Mon–Sat DS, MC, V.

THAI TASTE, *6892 Tylersville Rd., West Chester, (513) 421-6151.* Thai, Chinese and Vietnamese. Noodle, curry, and vegetarian dishes, plus sushi bar, $9–$16. Lunch seven days, dinner Sun. MC, V, DS.

WEST

THAI NAMTIP, *5461 North Bend Rd., Monford Heights, (513) 481-3360.* The west side's reigning house of classic Thai comfort food. Specializes in curries, noodles, sushi, Thai soups, satay, $5–$10. Lots of vegetarian options. Carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. MC, V, DS.

THAI TASTE, *5120 Crookshank Rd., Westwood, (513) 421-6151.* Thai, Chinese and Vietnamese. Noodle, curry, and vegetarian dishes, plus sushi bar, $9–$16. Lunch seven days, dinner Sun. MC, V, DS.

VIETNAMESE

CENTRAL

CILANTRO VIETNAMESE BISTRO, *2516 Clifton Ave., Clifton Heights, (513) 281-1732.* Vietnamese meal-sized soups and noodle dishes, large vegetarian menu, perfect for students on the go, under $10. Carryout. Lunch & dinner seven days. V, MC.

EAST

SONG LONG, *1737 Section Rd., Roselawn, (513) 351-7631.* Family owned. Serves Vietnamese and Chinese dishes: shrimp rolls, rice noodles topped with chicken, grilled chicken over bed of vinegarette vegetables, $8–$16.95. Full bar. Reservations for parties of five or more. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MCC, DS, DC.

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NORTH

CHOPSTICKS VIETNAMESE CUISINE, *7735 Cox Ln., West Chester, (513) 777-0804.* Vietnamese restaurant featuring spring rolls, beef noodle soup, and charbroiled pork chops, $3.95–$15.95. Beer and wine. Lunch & dinner Mon–Sat. MC, V, DS.

CHAIN

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[RESTAURANT INDEX]

A
A.J.'s Roadhouse ... 175
Abuelo's Mexican Food Embassy ... 196
Acapulco ... 195, 196
Adriatico's New York Style Pizza ... 196
Akash India ... 192
Akira ... 194
Alladin's Eatery ... 190
Allyn's ... 178
Alreddy Coffee & Café ... 182
Amarin ... 200
Ambar India ... 192
Amol India ... 192
Anand India ... 192
Anchor Grill ... 191
Anderson Township Pub ... 175
Ando Japanese Restaurant ... 194
Andy's Mediterranean Grille ... 189
Anna's Family Restaurant ... 190
Annabel's ... 183
Aoi Japanese Cuisine ... 194
Apna Indian Restaurant ... 192
Aponte's Pizzeria & Family Restaurant ... 197
Applebee's ... 202
Apsara ... 200
Argentine Bean Bistro ... 184
Arlin's Bar & Restaurant ... 174
Arloi Dee ... 200
Arnold's ... 174
Arthur's ... 175
Asiana ... 200
Athenian Restaurant ... 176
Awakenings Coffee and Wine ... 182

B
Baba India Restaurant ... 192
Bacalls Café ... 177
Back Porch Saloon ... 176
Ban Thai ... 200
Bangkok Bistro ... 200
Bangkok Express ... 199, 200
Bar Louie ... 175
Barleycorn's ... 175
Barresi's Italian Restaurant ... 193
BB Riverboats ... 175
BBQ Revue ... 177
Beehive Tavern & Restaurant ... 184
Behle Street Café ... 175
Bella Luna ... 193
Bellevue Bistro ... 175
Beluga ... 198
Betta's Italian Oven ... 192
Biagio's Bistro ... 192
Bistro Ginza Japanese Restaurant ... 194
BlackFinn Restaurant & Saloon ... 178
Blind Pig Grille & Bar ... 177
Blue Ash Chili Restaurant ... 192
Blue Gibbon Chinese Restaurant ... 179
Blue Jay Restaurant ... 190
The Blue Room ... 185
Bob Evans ... 202
Boca ... 193
Boi Na Braza Brazilian Steak House ... 198
Bombay City ... 192
The BonBonerie ... 182
Bonefish Grill ... 202
Bootsy's ... 183
Boston Butz Pit BBQ ... 177
Boswell Alley ... 174
Bouquet Restaurant and Wine Bar ... 175
Brandywine Inn Restaurant ... 176
Bravo! Cucina Italiana ... 194
Brazenhead Irish Pub ... 179
Brew House ... 175
Brick Street ... 185
Bridge House Restaurant ... 192
Brij Mohan ... 192
Brio Tuscan Grille ... 193
Brontë Bistro ... 183
Brown Dog Café ... 176
Bruegger's Bagels ... 202
Buca di Beppo ... 192
Buckhead Mountain Grill ... 202
Buffalo Wild Wings ... 202
Buffalo Wings and Rings ... 202
Buffalo's Southwest Café ... 196
Burbank's Real Bar-B-Q ... 177
Burrito Joe's ... 195
Busken Bakery ... 202

C
Cabana on the River ... 177
Cactus Pear Southwest Bistro ... 195, 196
Café de Paris ... 183
Café de Vine ... 183
Café Martin ... 183
Café Mediterranean ... 189
Camino Real ... 196
Camp Washington Chili ... 190
Campanello's ... 192
Cancun Mexican Restaurant ... 196
Carrabba's Italian Grille ... 202
Casa Tequila ... 196
The Caspian ... 185
Casual Chinese Restaurant ... 180
Cathay Kitchen ... 180
The Celestial Steakhouse ... 174
Century Inn ... 198
Chalk Food + Wine ... 184
Champs Restaurant & Sports Bar ... 174
Chan's Asian Wok ... 180
Chart House ... 198
Cheddar's Casual Café ... 202
Cheeseburger in Paradise ... 202
Cheesecake Factory ... 202
Chef C Gourmet ... 185
Chez Nora ... 184
Chicago Gyros ... 189
Chicago Joe's ... 176
Chicken on the Run ... 175
Chili Time ... 192
China Chef ... 180
China Express ... 180
China Gourmet ... 180
China Island ... 180
China Kitchen Restaurant ... 179
Chinese Imperial Inn ... 180
Chipotle ... 202
Choo Choo's ... 190
Chopsticks Vietnamese Cuisine ... 202
Chung Ching ... 180
Chung Kiwha Korean Barbecue Restaurant and Sushi ... 195
Cici's Pizza ... 202
Cilantro Vietnamese Bistro ... 200
City BBQ ... 177, 178
City View Tavern ... 174
The Claddagh Irish Pub ... 179
Clough Crossings ... 175
Cock & Bull English Pub ... 179
Coffee Emporium ... 181, 182
Coffee Please ... 182
The Coffeeshop on Madison ... 182
College Hill Coffee Co. and Casual Gourmet ... 182
Colonial Cottage ... 191
The Comet ... 195
Cornerstone Café and Bakehouse ... 176
Cosmo's Grille & Pub ... 184
The CourseView Restaurant ... 185
The Cracker Barrel ... 202
Cricket Lounge ... 183
Culver's ... 176
Cumin ... 184

D
Dancing Wasabi ... 194
Dave & Buster's ... 188
Daveed's at 934 ... 174
Dee Felice Cafe ... 178
Demetrios IV Restaurant ... 184
deSha's American Tavern ... 176
Detroit Joe's ... 175
Dewey's Pizza ... 196, 197
Dilly Café ... 175
Dingle House Irish Pub & Grub ... 179
DiPaolo's ... 188
Don Pablo's Mexican Kitchen & Cantina ... 202
Doodles ... 180
Double Dragon ... 180
Dragon City ... 180
Dusmesh Indian Restaurant ... 192
Dynasty Buffet ... 180

E
The Echo ... 190
Eddie Merlot's ... 199
El Coyote ... 195
El Rancho Grande ... 196
El Rio Grande Mexican Restaurant ... 196
Emanu East African Restaurant ... 174
Embers ... 175
Essencha Teahouse and Fine Teas ... 182
The Establishment ... 175
European Café ... 190

F
Famous Dave's BBQ ... 177
Fazoli's ... 202
Ferrari's Little Italy ... 193
Fiesta Brava ... 196
First Watch ... 202
First Wok ... 202
Five Guys Burgers and Fries ... 202
Flanagans Front Porch Saloon ... 176
Floyd's ... 189
Foster's Lake Forest Restaurant ... 192
Four Seasons Restaurant ... 198
Fratelli's New York Style Pizzeria ... 197
Fred and Gari's ... 174
Freda's Corner Café ... 188
Friendly Stop ... 176
Frisch's Big Boy ... 202
Front Porch Coffeehouse ... 183
Fruities ... 183
Ft. Wright Family Restaurant ... 191
Fuji Steak House ... 194

G
Gabby's Café ... 177
Germano's Restaurant ... 194
Gold Star Chili ... 202
Golden Corral ... 202
Golden Dragon ... 180
The Golden Lamb ... 176
Goodies Barbecue Restaurant ... 178
Gordo's Pub & Grill ... 174
The Gourmet on Broadway ... 190
Grand Buffet ... 180, 181
Grand China ... 181
Grand Finale ... 176
Grand Oriental ... 180
Gravy ... 192
Greek to Me ... 190
The Green Derby ... 191
Green Dog ... 183
Green Papaya ... 200
Greenup Café ... 188
Greyhound Tavern ... 176
Guenther's Steak & Seafood House ... 199
Guru India ... 192
Guys and Dolls ... 176

H
Habañero ... 195, 196
Habits Cafe ... 184
Half Day Café ... 188
Hamburger Mary's Bar & Grille ... 174
Happy Garden Restaurant ... 181
Hathaway's Coffee Shop ... 190
Havana Martini Club ... 183
Henke Winery ... 177
Hi Bombay! ... 192
The Hideaway ... 183
Highland Coffeehouse ... 181
Hofbrauhaus ... 188
The Holy Grail Tavern & Grille ... 174
Homer's Original Smorgasbord ... 176
Honey ... 183
Honeybaked Ham Co. & Café ... 202
Hong Kong Wok ... 180
Hooters ... 202
Hot Wings Sports Café ... 177
House of Sun ... 180
House of Zheng ... 180
Houston Inn ... 188
Hugo ... 175
Hyde Park Hitching Post ... 190

I
Ichiban Japanese Restaurant ... 194
IHOP ... 202
Indigo Casual Gourmet Cafe ... 184
Ingredients ... 183
Iris Book Café ... 181
Iron Horse Restaurant ... 176
Island Frydays ... 178
Izzy's ... 202

J
J & J Restaurant ... 192
J. Alexander's ... 174
Jade Buffet ... 180
Jag's Steak & Seafood ... 199
Jan's Chinese ... 180
Javier's Mexican Restaurant ... 195
Jean Paul's Paradiso ... 184
JeanRo Bistro ... 188
Jeff Ruby's Carlo & Johnny ... 199
Jeff Ruby's Precinct ... 199
Jeff Ruby's Waterfront ... 199
Jeff Ruby's ... 198
JerZees Pub & Grub ... 176
Jim & Jack's On the River ... 199
Jim Dandy's Family BBQ ... 178
Jimmy John's Gourmet Sandwiches ... 202
Jo An Japanese Restaurant ... 194
Joe's Crab Shack ... 202
John Philip's Restaurant and Bar ... 199
Johnny Chan 2 ... 180
Johnny Rockets ... 202

K
Karlo's Bistro Italia ... 193
Kenning's Circle K ... 199
Keystone Bar & Grill ... 185
King Wok ... 179
Kinneret Café ... 190
Knotty Pine on the Bayou ... 178
Koka Coffee Lounge ... 181, 182
Korea House ... 195
Ko-Sho Japanese Restaurant ... 194
Kreimer's Bier Haus West ... 188
Krimmer's Italianette Pizza ... 196
KT's Barbecue & Deli ... 178
Kyojin Japanese Seafood Restaurant ... 194
Kyoto Japanese Cuisine ... 195

L
L'Auberge ... 188
La Bodega ... 188
La Cherie Bakery & Bistro ... 185
La Comedia Dinner Theatre ... 188
La Mexicana ... 196
La Petite France ... 188
La Petite Pierre ... 188
LaRosa's ... 198
Laszlo's Iron Skillet ... 188

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Latitudes Café & Bar....184
Lavomatic....184
Lebo's of California....175
leBoxx Café....174
Lemon Grass Thai Cuisine....200
Lenhardt's & Christy's....188
The Lindner Café at the Taft Museum of Art....184
Lone Star Steakhouse & Saloon....202
Longworth's....174
Lookout Joe Coffee Roasters....182
Lu Lu's Asian Diner....181
Lucy Blue Pizza....196, 197
Lucy's Diner....176
Ludlow-Bromley Yacht Club....176

M

Mac's Pizza Pub....174
Madeira Inn....175
Madonna's Bar and Grill....190
Mahogany's Bar & Grill....176
Main Moon Chinese Buffet....180
Main Street Café....175
Main Street Diner....190
Mama Vita's....194
Mama's Grill....190
Mammoth Café....182
Mansion Hill Tavern....176
Margarita's Authentic Mexican Grill....202
Market Street Grille....176
Martino's....192
Marx Hot Bagels....188
Matsuya Japanese Restaurant....194
Maury's Tiny Cove....199
Max & Erma's....202
Mayberry....184
McAlister's Deli....202
McCormick & Schmick's Seafood Restaurant....198
Mecklenburg Gardens....188
Mei Japanese Restaurant....195
Mekong Thai Cuisine....200
Melt....184
The Melting Pot....188
Midway Café....196
Mimi's Café....176
Mio's Pizzeria....202
Mirage Mediterranean Restaurant....190
Mitchell's Fish Market....202
Miyoshi Japanese Restaurant....194
Moe's Southwest Grill....202
Mokka and the Sunset Bar & Grill....185
Molly Malone's Irish Pub....179
Montgomery Inn....177, 178
Montoyas Mexican Restaurant....196
Moon Garden Korean & Chinese Restaurant....195
Morton's....198
Moy Moy's....180
Mr. Gene's Doghouse....177
Mr. Sushi....194
Mt. Adams Bar & Grill....174
Mt. Adams Fish House....198
Mt. Lookout Tavern....175
Mulligan's Hyde Park Pub....184
Murphin Ridge Inn....175
Myra's Dionysus....184
Mythos Restaurant....189

N

Nada....195
National Exemplar....175
Nectar....184
New China Gourmet....181
New Krishna Indian Cuisine....192
Newport Pizza Company....197
Nicholson's Tavern & Pub....179
Nick & Tom's Restaurant & Bar....177
Nicola's Ristorante....192
915 Pub & Grill....175
Noble Roman's Pizza & Tuscano's Subs....202
Noodles & Company....202

O

O'Bryon's Irish Pub....179
O'Charley's....202
O'Malley's in the Alley....190
Old Spaghetti Factory....202
Olive Garden....202
Olives....174
Orchids at Palm Court....174
Oriental Wok....180
The Original Pancake House....202
Otto's....176
Outback Steakhouse....202

P

P.F. Chang's....202
The Palace....174
Palomino Restaurant....174
Panera Bread....202
Pappadeaux Seafood Kitchen....202
Park Chili....190
Parkers Blue Ash Grill....199
Paula's Café....190
Paxton's Grill....176
PeeWee's Place....176
Peking Garden....180
Pelican's Reef....198
Pera Mediterranean....189
Perkins Family Restaurant....202
The Pine Club....199
Pit to Plate....178
The Pita Pit....188
Pizza Pan Corinthian Restaurant....189
Plaza Café....190
The Polo Grille....176
Pomodori's Pizzeria & Trattoria....196, 197
Pompilios....194
Ponderosa/Bonanza....202
Portofino Pizza & Deli....196
Potbelly Sandwich Works....202
Primavista....194
Proud Rooster....190, 192
The Pub at Crestview Hills....179
The Pub at Rookwood Mews....179
Putz's Creamy Whip....177

Q

Qdoba Mexican Grill....202
The Quarter Bistro....184
Quatman Café....190, 192
Queen Mary Family Restaurant....190

R

Ramundo's Pizzeria & Deli....196
Rasheeda's Deli & Catering....190
Raya's Lebanese Restaurant....189
Raymond's Hong Kong Café....180
Reality Tuesday Café....182
Red Fox Grill....190
Red Kitchen....175
Red Lobster....202
Red Onion Café....176
Red Pepper....179
Red Robin Gourmet Burgers....202
Red Squirrel....202
The Redmoor....174
The Restaurants at Palm Court....174
Richie's....190
Riley's Restaurant and Bakery....176
Riley's Restaurant....177
Rima's Diner....191
Rincon Mexicano Restaurant & Cantina....195
Riverside Korean Restaurant....195
Riverview 360 Revolving Restaurant....176
Roc-A-Fellas....197
Rock Bottom Restaurant & Brewery....184
Rohrer's Tavern....177
Roly Poly....202
Ron's Roost....192
Rong Tan's Bistro & Lounge....180
The Rookwood Bar & Restaurant....174
Root Beer Stand....177
Ruby Tuesday....202
Rue Dumaine....188
Rusty's Ristorante....193
Ruthai's Thai Kitchen....200
Ryan's Grill....175

S

Sabor Peruano....188
Sake Bomb....194
Salem Gardens....190
Salt of the Earth....184
Sammy's Gourmet Burgers and Beer....177
Samurai Sam's Teriyaki Grill....202
Santorini Restaurant....177
The Schoolhouse Restaurant....190
Scotti's Italian Restaurant....193
Sebastian's....190
Servatii Pastry Shop & Deli....202
Shadeau Breads....184
Shanghai Mama's....180
Siam Orchid....200
Sichuan Bistro Chinese Gourmet....180
Silver Spring House....177
Silver Wok....180
Silverglade's on 8th....174
Silverton Café....191
Sitwells....182
Skally's....190
Skinny Legs Pub & Grill....176
Skip's Bagel Deli....177
Sky Galley....191
Skyline Chili....202
Slatts Pub....177
Sleepy Hollow....177
Slims....184
Smokey Bones....202
Soho Japanese Bistro....195
Song Long....200
Sonic Drive-In....202
Sophia's Deli & Restaurant....190
Spare Time Grill....191
Sports Page Restaurant....174
Stone's Restaurant....192
Strasse Haus....188
Sugar n' Spice Restaurant....190
Sukhothai Thai Cuisine....200
The Summit....184
Sung Korean Bistro....195
Sunny Deli....174
Suzie Wong's....180
Sweet Basil....200
Symphony Hotel....175

T

T.G.I. Friday's....202
Tabby's American Bar & Grill....177
Taco Casa....195, 196
Taj Mahal Indian Cuisine....192
Take the Cake....184
Tandoor India Restaurant....192
Tano Bistro....177
Taqueria Cruz....196
Taqueria Mercado....196
Taste of Julia's....192
Tavern on the Hill....193
Taz....190
Tazza Mia....182
Teak Thai Cuisine & Sushi Bar....200
Teller's of Hyde Park....184
10 West....176
Teranga....174
Terrace Café....175
Terry's Turf Club....175
Texas Roadhouse....202
Thai Café....200
Thai Express....200
Thai Namtip....200
Thai Taste....200
Through the Garden....177
Tina's....175
Tinks Café....175
Tokyo Dragon....180
Tokyo Japanese Restaurant....195
Toot's....177
Tostado's Grill....196
Total Juice Plus....184
The Tousey House Tavern....176
Trattoria Roma....193
Trio....175
Trotta's Pizza and Drive-Thru....198
Tucker's....190
20 Brix....184

U

Uncle Woody's Pub & Eatery....190
Uncle Yip's Seafood and Dim Sum....180
Uno Chicago Grill....197

V

The Veg Head....188
Via Vite....193
Vinoklet Winery....177
Virgils Café....185
Vito's Café....194
Vitor's Bistro....188

W

Walt's Barbeque....178
Walt's Hitching Post....177
Washington Platform Saloon and Restaurant....175
Wertheim's....188
What's for Dinner?....191
Whisky's....184
The White House Inn....177
Whole Foods....202
Wild Ginger....200
Wild Mike's....177
Wildflower Café & CoffeeHouse....188
Willie's Sports Cafe....184, 185, 188
Win Wok....180, 181
Woe Is Me Barbecue....177
Wok & Roll....181
Wok of China....181
The Works....192
World Food Bar....184

X

Xochimilco....196

Y

York St. Café....176
Yum Yum Chinese Restaurant....180

Z

Zazou Grill and Pub....191
Zen and Now Coffeehouse....183
Zip's Café....191
Zola Pub and Grill....176
ZZ's Pizza Company....196

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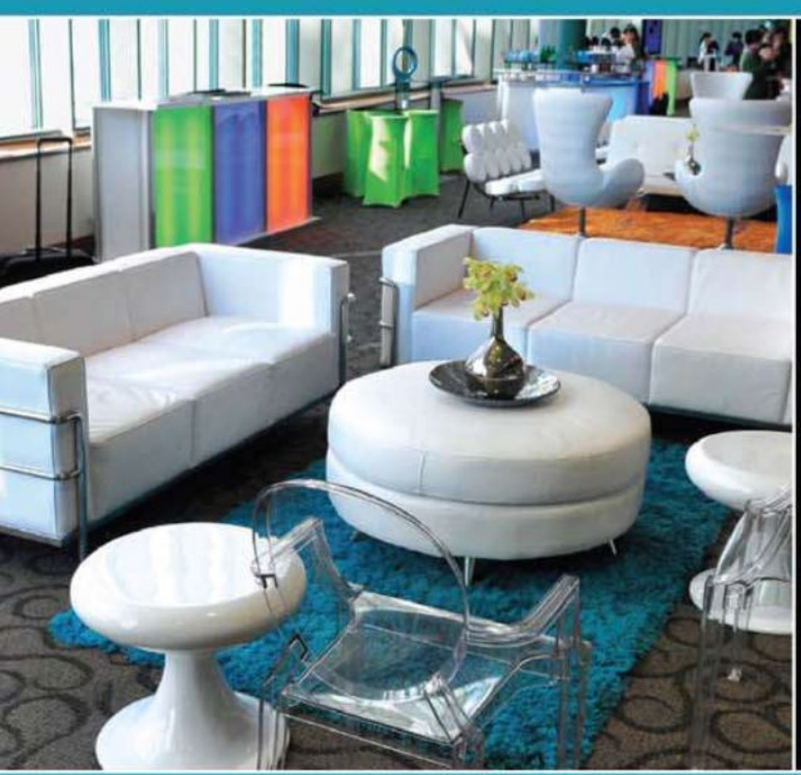

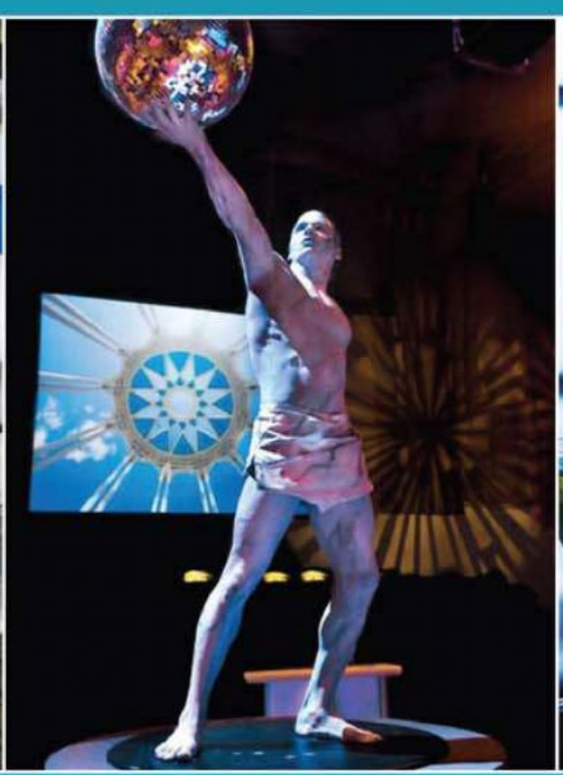

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The Chieftains + Ry Cooder

Start your St. Patrick's Day celebration early by tuning in to 91.7 WVXU on Sunday, March 14 at 8 pm.

The Chieftains rekindle their Grammy-winning partnership with Ry Cooder for St. Patrick's Day, illuminating musical and historical bonds between Ireland and Mexico. The world's most celebrated Irish music group revisits the legend of the San Patricio Battalion, unsung heroes of the Mexican-American war. You'll enjoy guest appearances by Linda Ronstadt, Liam Neeson, Van Dyke Parks, Los Tigres del Norte, Carlos Nunez and many others. In addition to interviews with Paddy Moloney, Ry Cooder and others involved in the project, you'll also hear songs from their new recording titled *San Patricio.*

NEWS DOCUMENTARIES

Thursday, March 4 / 7 pm

Rocket Girls and Astro-nettes is the story of women in the ultimate "Man's World" – working **first** in the labs and then the Shuttle crew cabins of NASA. These stories explore the experiences of NASA's **first** woman engineers and scientists and its **first** astronauts. The program is narrated by Eileen Collins, the **first** woman commander of a Space Shuttle.

Thursday, March 11 / 7 pm

In *Capping Carbon*, the quest for a new Kyoto Protocol is generating plenty of hot air around the globe. This documentary explores the changing climate of carbon emissions from the Peruvian rainforest, where economic development is slashing a weapon in the war on warming, to the US where businesses are struggling to scrub their smokestacks, and the carbon credit debate is heating up on Capitol Hill.

WVXU'S NEWS RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Check out Infomatters, WVXU's online news destination for junior high and high school students. *wvxuinfomatters.org* provides a dynamic source of in-depth information from local and national sources to help dig deeper into current events, and explore and understand the news of the day.

The website has interactive tools for understanding the economy, access to interviews and features with decision makers and newsmakers, information on climate change, the daily news from NPR, and links to local and national news, government, and historical sources.

Students can also ask questions of the experts and guests appearing on WVXU's panel discussion program, *Impact Cincinnati*, each week.

For a fun way to explore current events and stimulate the discussion of the issues facing our community, visit *wvxuinfomatters.org* today! InfoMatters is supported by the Charles H. Dater Foundation.

wvxu.org

91.7 WVXU CINCINNATI

The Chieftains

Eileen Collins

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20th Anniversary Cincinnati Wine Festival

You're invited to join Honorary Chair Michael Mondavi of Folio Fine Wine Partners to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Cincinnati Wine Festival March 12 and 13 at Duke Energy Center. Throughout the weekend, winemakers and winery representatives will entertain you with an exciting lineup of events designed to showcase their award-winning wines and delicious food.

Whether you are a long time lover of wine or an intrigued beginner the Cincinnati Wine Festival is the place to explore the extraordinary world of wine. You can enjoy gourmet winery dinners at Cincinnati's finest restaurants, an exciting live wine auction and scrumptious luncheon, and truly GRAND Tastings. There are always new wines to sample from around the world and wine experts ready to share their passion for wine with you.

Returning to the Grand Tastings this year is The Special Tasting Room offering premium wines an hour before the Grand Tasting opens. Don't miss this unique opportunity to sample some of the finest wines available.

For more information on all the festival events, or to purchase tickets, visit *winefestival.com* or call 513-728-WINE.

Proceeds from the Cincinnati Wine Festival benefit 90.9 WGUC and other local non-profit organizations. Over the last 19 years, almost $3 million has been contributed to Greater Cincinnati charities.

Duke Energy Center

MUSIC CINCINNATI

Tune in to 90.9 WGUC for *Music Cincinnati* on Sunday, March 14th, at 9 pm. From an October 2009 Linton Chamber Music concert, you'll enjoy works by Mozart, Barber, and Brahms. Performers include Jaime Laredo, Celeste Golden, Ida Kavafian, Sharon Robinson, Owen Lee, Randy Bowman, Dwight Parry, Richie Hawley, William Winstead, and Elizabeth Freimuth.

KITE FESTIVAL RETURNS!

The skies come alive with some of the most beautiful, colorful, and large kites you've ever seen at this year's **Otto M. Budig Family Foundation Kitefest**, brought to you by 90.9 WGUC.

Enjoy the aerial dynamics of Chicago Fire, the frenzied kite flying of 180 Go, plenty of open fly space and kite making and more for the kids. Join the fun and go fly a kite at Voice of America Park in West Chester on April 10 and 11. There will be plenty of fun, food, and special events for the kids. The event takes place noon to 5 pm each day and is free. More details may be found online at *www.wguc.org/kitefest.*

The Otto M. Budig Family Foundation KiteFest

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20TH ANNIVERSARY

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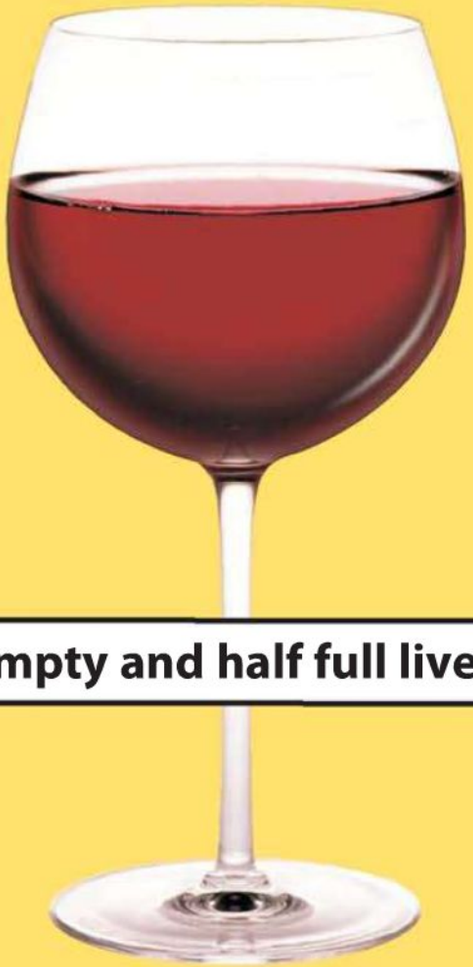

Where half empty and half full live in harmony.

Wine Tastings on March 18, 20 and 27.

On Thursday evening, March 18, we spotlight Mourvèdre, one of the world's great reds. Chenin Blanc, a Loire Valley white gets some afternoon loving March 20. On Saturday, March 27, we mix it up with a tour of our top rated reds and whites under $20. Want more? Join Amy Tobin's trip to California wine country.

See us online for details and to RSVP for all events.

A special "thank you" to MacMurray Ranch and their scene-stealing pinots for making the last in our California Wine Country Dinners a sold-out success.

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Welcome to the 2010 Cincinnati International Wine Festival 20th Anniversary Year

EVENT DETAILS

THE GRAND TASTINGS

The centerpiece of the Wine Festival are the Grand Tastings. Sample more than 600 wines from 130 wineries, bid on silent auction lots and enjoy delicious food and live music.

Duke Energy Convention Center 3rd Floor, Grand Ballroom

- *Friday, March 12 and Saturday, March 13, 2010, 6:30-9:00 pm*
  Tickets: $70 per person ($75 per person at the door)
- *Saturday Afternoon, March 13, 2010, 2:30-4:30 pm*
  Tickets: $60 per person ($65 per person at the door)

SPECIAL TASTING ROOM

A selection of high-end wines will be poured in the Special Tasting Room one hour before each Grand Tasting.

Duke Energy Convention Center 3rd Floor, Junior Ballroom

- *Friday, March 12 and Saturday, March 13, 2010, 5:30-6:30 pm.*
- *Saturday Afternoon, 1:30-2:30 pm*
- *Tickets: $35 per person plus Grand Tasting admission (includes seven tastes)*

WINERY DINNERS

Enjoy pairings of world-class food and wine as Cincinnati-area restaurants team up with visiting winemakers.

Participating restaurants and winery representatives are listed on page W8.

- *Thursday, March 11, 2010*
  Tickets: $125 - $150
- *A special winery dinner will take place on Wednesday, March 10th at The Palace, hosted by 2010 Honorary Chair Michael Mondavi, featuring some of his finest wines.*
  Tickets: $175

CHARITY AUCTION & LUNCHEON

Bid on a phenomenal catalog of limited-release bottlings, winemaker-signed grand format bottles, rare wines coaxed from the cellars of notable Cincinnatians, wine cellar tours, and much more. Then, enjoy a gourmet meal with carefully selected wine pairings presented by winemakers from around the world.

Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, Hall of Mirrors

- *Saturday, March 13, 2010, 9:30 am Champagne Reception & Silent Auction, 11 am Live Auction Followed by a Winery Luncheon*
- *Tickets: $125 per person*

TICKET INFORMATION

Advance tickets for all events can be purchased online at **www.winefestival.com** or by calling **513-723-WINE (9463).**

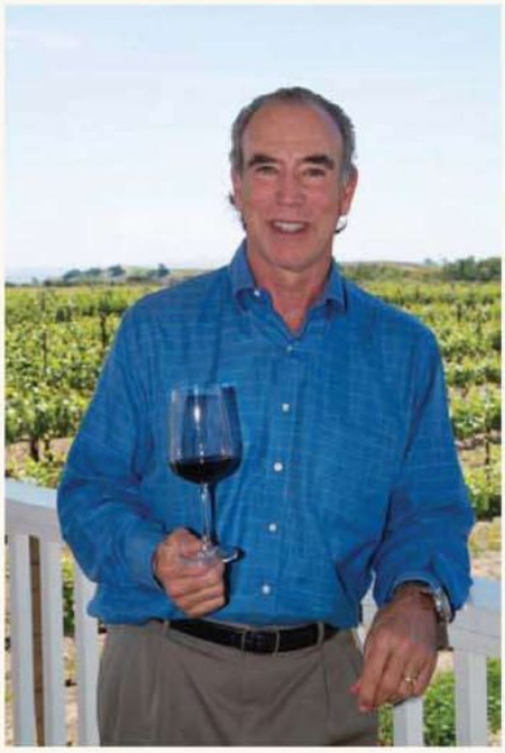
More at ebook-free-download.net or magazinesdownload.com

MICHAEL**MONDAVI**

FOUNDER AND COACH, FOLIO FINE WINE PARTNERS

A third-generation winemaker captures the spirit of the industry by blending fresh ideas with timeless traditions. by **KAYDEE WILSON**

In the winter of 2003, the fate of Napa Valley's prestigious Robert Mondavi Winery was at a crossroads. Faced with the pressures of heading the privately owned yet publicly traded company, CEO Michael Mondavi acknowledged that the near-sighted mentality of the company's 21st century shareholders was not conducive to the ancient winemaking methods by which he and his father had established the label nearly 40 years before. Unwilling to compromise the company's traditional business model for faster returns, Michael and his family decided to sell the winery the following year.



It was the end of an era, but it was also an opportunity for a new business venture. Convinced that the continued success of small wineries would require a strong bond between independent vineyards, Michael partnered with his wife, Isabel, and children, Rob and Dina, to form Folio Fine Wine Partners in late 2004. A first-of-its-kind company, Folio produces and imports fine wine from independent wineries around the globe and also provides sales, marketing and public relations for each of the brands it represents. Part winery, part PR firm, Folio's goal is to allow small wineries the freedom they need to continue producing the finest wine in the world, while still remaining competitive in a changing international market.

The Mondavi family's vision has proven to be a success. Aside from importing some of the world's best wines, Folio also operates the Folio Winemakers' Studio, a custom-crush winery located in Napa's Carneros region, and Folio Enoteca, a casual wine bar and café located in the Oxbow Public Market in downtown Napa. His dedication to the industry has won Michael a number of awards throughout his career, including the James Beard Foundation's "Who's Who in Food and Wine" award, the "Industry Executive of the Year" award by The Market Watch Leaders, a group of top industry executives, and the "World of Food and Wine" Lifetime Achievement Award.

While his job entails working with high-profile vendors selling big-name brands (Folio's list of partners includes the famous Marchesi dè Frescobaldi of Italy, an elite family that's been producing wine for more than 700 years), Michael remains committed to maintaining the integrity of the industry he loves.

"I have two main guidelines for selecting international wines," he says. "First, I have to like and respect the people who own the business and, hopefully, they like and respect my family and me. Second, I have to be proud to serve each of their wines in my home to family and friends. Only wines that meet those two criteria are represented by Folio Fine Wine Partners."

Michael says he looks forward to introducing the Folio brands to local wine enthusiasts attending the 2010 Cincinnati International Wine Festival. "The best thing about working with wine is working with the customers; great people who love food, conversation, good company and good wine, and who are open to trends," he says. "Cincinnati is a dynamic city, with lots of excellent restaurants and wines, and it's wonderful to have the opportunity to meet with people who share those pleasures. I'm thrilled and humbled to be invited to be the honorary chair." ■

Michael Mondavi continues his commitment to the winemaking industry with his new company, Folio Fine Wine Partners.

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A VIP CALIFORNIA WINE TRIP
LATE APRIL 2010!

Final payment due March 25, 2010
BOOK NOW!

Join Amy Tobin, Director of EQ at the Party Source and host of Amy's Table on Q102, **and *Cincinnati Magazine*** to meet four award-winning vintners.

WHERE:
Sonoma County and San Francisco

The Lodge at Sonoma Renaissance Resort & Spa

The Stanford Court Renaissance San Francisco Hotel

WHEN:
Depart Cincinnati Thursday, 4/29/10;
Return Sunday 5/2/10

WHO:
This trip is produced by EQ at the Party Source, Travel Leaders and *Cincinnati Magazine*.

INVESTMENT:
$1,695 per person*
includes round-trip airfare from Cincinnati to San Francisco, 3 nights hotel, motorcoach travel, 3 private winery tours and a VIP reception. (based on double occupancy, single rate available)

WHY:
To rejuvenate you!

THE 4 DAY, 3 NIGHT TRIP
begins with a private vineyard tour and lunch at Terra Valentine, Spring Mountain/Napa Valley.

+

- An exclusive winery tour and luncheon at Foppiano Vineyards in the Russian River Valley–the oldest family-owned winery in California.
- Wine tasting, tour and dinner just for our group at historic MacMurray Ranch, one of the premier Pinot Noir producers in the Middle Reach of the Russian River Valley
- An early evening VIP reception in San Francisco with the owners of Navarro Vineyards—your exclusive opportunity to taste high-end wines not available outside California

FOR A COMPLETE TRIP ITINERARY, TASTING MENUS AND MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
www.cincinnatimagazine.com/winecountrytrip

All travel arrangements will be made by Beth Baran at Travel Leaders: beth.baran@travelleaders.com, 859.441.7992.

*price may vary depending on total number of travelers

AMY'S table · at the party source · Cincinnati Magazine · TRAVEL LEADERS

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THE CINCINNATI INTERNATIONAL WINE FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

1991 The first annual **CINCINNATI INTERNATIONAL WINE FESTIVAL** takes place at the Omni Netherland Plaza. Founded by Russ Wiles, the two day festival includes Grand Tastings, a Live Auction, Food and Wine Seminars and Winemaker Dinners. A total of $35,000 is donated to WGUC 90.9 FM.

1992 **TASTE THE GOLD** is introduced. This new event highlights the medal-winning wines from the previous year's Festival.

1995 **THE MIDWEST BEER FEST** is incorporated into the Cincinnati International Wine Festival's line-up of events. It runs for 4 years and features top performers such as Tina Turner and The Doobie Brothers.

1999

The Kroger Co. joins the list of Wine Festival sponsors and several years later in 2005 became a Presenting Sponsor. Their support continues at the Presenting level today.

1991 · 1992 · 1995 · 1999 · 2000

2000 The Cincinnati International Wine Festival kicks off its first annual Golf Tournament at the Western Hills Country Club. This outing sets a new standard for premier golf tournaments. Locally, it is the first to incorporate fine-dining restaurants preparing food on the course during game play. The tournament is currently known as the **RUSS WILES MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT.**

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20 YEARS

2003 After his passing, the **RUSS WILES SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE CULINARY ARTS** was established at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College to honor Russ' vision to expose the Cincinnati community to fine wine and great food. The scholarship helps two students every year.

2007 The **CHARITY AUCTION & LUNCHEON** is introduced with Dennis Speigel serving as the first Honorary Chair of the event. This event continues to be held at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, Hall of Mirrors and is a transition from the evening Gala.

2010 **MICHAEL MONDAVI** is named Honorary Chair of the 20th Annual Wine Festival. Michael has been involved in the wine industry for 44 years. He currently serves as the Founder & Coach of Folio Fine Wine Partners, a company he established in 2004 with his wife and children.

2003 2005 2007 2008 2009 2010

2005 The Food and Wine Seminars are replaced with a **SATURDAY AFTERNOON GRAND TASTING**. Attendance at this tasting continues to increase, leveling its popularity with that of the Friday Evening Tasting.

2008

The Special Tasting Room is incorporated, featuring high-end red wines that retail for $60 and above and white wines that retail for $35 and above. It opens one hour prior to each Grand Tasting.

2009

Total monetary contributions close in on $3 MILLION after the success of the 2009 Cincinnati International Wine Festival. More than 26 beneficiaries have received financial support from the Festival since its inception.

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Turning Grapes into Gold...and Silver and Bronze

Insight into the Wine Festival Competition

Each year during the Festival, all the participating wineries are offered the chance to submit their wines to be judged alongside their competition. This is the Olympics of the wine industry—enter your best in hopes of achieving recognition for outstanding effort in the form of Gold, Silver and Bronze medals.

Close to 400 wines are swirled, sniffed, sipped and evaluated by 45 judges, selected from a pool of wine industry professionals and experienced consumers. They include wine educators, culinary professionals, winemakers, restaurateurs, winery owners, wine store owners, certified sommeliers and wine salespersons. Many have been judges for almost every Competition in the past 18 years, and they must enroll in a mandatory, rigorous training program each year in order to be selected.

Each wine is tasted using a modified blind format, which means that the type of grape and where it's grown is revealed, but not the winery, wine name nor vintage. The judges use a 20-point grading scale to rate each wine on five major categories. A consensus score for each wine is reached, and that score will determine which medal is awarded: an average of 18 points and above, Gold; 17 points and above, Silver; 16 points and above, Bronze. The Gold medal category has never included a perfect score but we always expect to discover those rare wines each year.

The staff behind the scenes works all day long to ensure the wines are presented to the judges in the most professional manner. Only Riedel glassware is used and it is washed and hand polished after each use. If any judge deems any wine has "off" aromas, the wine is pulled without question and another bottle is opened. The scoring sheets from each judge are collected and compiled by a third party and the scoring is tabulated independently from Festival staff. The results are returned to the Festival, and the medals are then awarded.

The Festival Competition is recognized nationally and is considered one of the premier wine events in the country. These rules are established to ensure absolute credible results, and the Festival Board is committed to enforcing the rules to maintain the highest professional standards for the Competition.

2010 WINERY DINNERS
THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2010
(unless otherwise noted)

RESTAURANT	TICKET PRICE	WINERY
Boca	$150	Marc deGrazia Selections
Carlo & Johnny	$150	Banfi International
DaVeed's at 934	$125	Graziano Family of Wines
Eddie Merlot's	$125	Kuleto Estate
Embers	$150	The Hess Collection
Hugo	$125	Frank Family Vineyards
Jags	$150	The Meeker Vineyard / Truchard Vineyards
Jeff Ruby's Steakhouse	$150	Wines from the Nickel & Nickel Family featuring Far Niente, Nickel & Nickel and Dolce
Morton's, The Steakhouse	$150	Villa San Juliette
Orchids at Palm Court	$125	Terlato International
The Palace	$175	Folio Wines featuring Michael Mondavi (Winery Dinner Thursday, March 10, 2010)

GlobalCloud Hilton Cincinnati LOCAL 12 Cincinnati Magazine WQNC 90.9

MAKE YOUR RESERVATION TODAY!
513-723-WINE or www.winefestival.com

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THE COMPETITION

THE RATING SCALE:

18+ points = Gold • 17+ points = Silver • 16+ points = Bronze

APPEARANCE
1 point maximum

Wine should always be brilliant or clear in appearance. No points for a wine that's hazy or cloudy. And if there's sediment (you know, those little, floaty things), well, that's completely unacceptable.

AROMA & BOUQUET
6 points maximum

While these characteristics are somewhat separate, they are generally melded together. Ratings range from extraordinary to objectionable. An extraordinary wine has the unmistakable characteristic aroma of the grape variety and/or the wine type. It must have an outstanding and complex bouquet and an exceptional balance of aroma and bouquet.

TASTE & TEXTURE
6 points maximum

This is an important focus. It requires just the right balance of sensorial experience. You never want to overload the senses, as some chefs might do by overloading a plate.

FINISH OR AFTERTASTE
3 points maximum

It is that preferred pleasant taste that lingers in your mouth after the wine is gone. You want the lingering aftertaste to be outstanding, a pleasant reminder of a great wine.

OVERALL IMPRESSION
4 points maximum

This is where the judge might ask questions such as:

- Would I buy this wine at every opportunity, regardless of price?
- Would I buy this wine if it were priced at X? Or at Y?
- Would I only drink this wine if it were served to me at a party?
- Would I prefer not drink at all if this were my only option?

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RATING CHART

On the following pages are listings of the Wine Festival exhibitors, the booth numbers and the wines you can sample in each of their booths.

EVENT SPONSORS

FOOD BOOTHS

Argentina
Austria
Australia
Chile
France
Germany
Italy
Macedonia
New Zealand
Slovenia
South Africa
Spain
United States

1 - ACQUA PANNA/S. PELLEGRINO

2 - ERIC SOLOMON SELECTIONS

2006 Gramona Gran Cuvee Cava
2008 Mas Que Vinos Ercavio Blanco
2008 Rafael Palacios Louro
2007 Artazu Artazuri Garnacha
2007 Creta Roble
2005 Castano Solanera Vinas Viejas
2006 Tomas Cusine El Vilosell
2006 Mas Doix Salanques Priorat

Notes:.....

3 - MARC DEGRACIA SELECTIONS

NV Bortolotti Lagrein Rosato
2007 Costantini Frascati
2006 Ferrara Greco di Tufo
2007 San Pietro Pinot Noir
2006 Boccadigabbia Rosso Piceno
2006 Palazzino Chianti Argenina
2006 Clerico Barbera Trevigne
2004 Piaggia Carmignano Riserva

Notes:.....

4 - ROBERT WHALE SELECTIONS

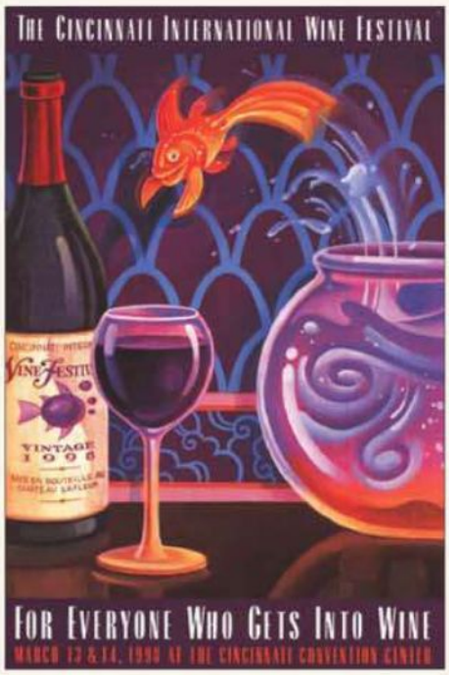
2006 Yarraman Barn Buster Semillon Verdelho
2008 Seifried Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Seifried Riesling
2008 Tamar Ridge Devil's Corner Pinot Noir
2006 Yarraman Hell Raiser Cabernet Merlot
2003 Rafferty's Rules Shiraz Cabernet
2007 Coriole Sangiovese Shiraz
2006 Coriole Redstone Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

5 - GRAZIANO FAMILY OF WINES

2007 Graziano Chenin Blanc
2009 Enotria Moscato
2006 Saint Gregory Pinot Noir, Reserve, Anderson Valley
2006 Graziano Zinfandel, Mendocino
2006 Enotria Barbera
2006 Graziano Coro Mendocino

Notes:.....



6 - MCCRORIE FAMILY VINEYARD

2005 Burly Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Burly Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

6 - NEAL FAMILY VINEYARDS

2006 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2005 Fifteen Forty Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Zinfandel
2006 Rutherford Dust Petite Syrah

Notes:.....

7 - KEURIG/GREEN MOUNTAIN COFFEE ROASTERS

8 - VINOKLET WINERY, INC.

2008 Cincinnatus
2008 Tears of Joy
2008 Traminette Master Reserve
2008 Sunset Blush
2008 Dreamer
2008 In Vino Veritas
2008 La Dolce Vita
2008 Brother Joe

Notes:.....

9 - RAVEN'S GLENN WINERY

NV Raven Rouge
NV White Merlot
NV Vidal Blanc
2007 Merlot
NV Sangria
NV Cabernet Sauvignon
NV White Zinfandel
2008 Vidal Bland Ice Wine

Notes:.....

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TASTING NOTES

SPECIAL TASTING ROOM WINES

Antinori Antica Chardonnay
Antinori Antica Cabernet
Artadi Pagos Viejos Rioja
Banfi Brunello Di Montalcino
Banfi Summus Sant' Antino
Beringer Private Reserve Chardonnay
Chateau St. Michelle Ethos Chardonnay
Chimney Rock Elevage
Clos du Val Stags' Leap District Cabernet Sauvignon
Col Solare Red
Conn Creek Anthology
Cuvaison Chardonnay S Block
Daniel Bocquenet Echezeaux
Daniel et Martine Barraud Pouilly Fuisse La Verchere
Domaine Comtesse Bernard de Cherisey Meursault-Blagny 1er Cru "La Genelotte"
Far Niente Chardonnay, Napa Valley
Felix Callejo Seleccion Ribera del Duero
Franciscan Chardonnay Cuvee Sauvage
Franciscan Magificat
Frescobaldi Mormoreto, Toscana, IGT
Gini Salvarenza Soave Classico
Hartwell Cabernet Sauvignon Reserve, Stags' Leap District
Hoopes Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon
Krupp Brothers Black Bart Syrah
Krupp Brothers Veraison Cabernet Sauvignon
Liparita Cellars "Oakville" Cabernet Sauvignon
Louis M. Martini Cabernet Monte Rosso
"M" by Michael Mondavi
Merryvale Profile
Miner Oracle
Neal Family Vineyards "Second Chance Vineyard" Cabernet Sauvignon
Nickel & Nickel Cabernet, John C. Sullenger Vineyard
Penfold's Bin 707 Cabernet Sauvignon
Penfold's Grandfather Rare Tawny Port
Pine Ridge Fortis
Potazzine Brunello di Montalcino
Ramian Estates "Chapter Six"
Reynolds Family Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
Robert Mondavi Oakville Cabernet
Rodney Strong Reserve Chardonnay
Rodney Strong Reserve Pinot Noir
Shafer Relentless
Spring Valley Uriah
Sitios de Bodega V3
Stags Leap Karia Chardonnay
Stag's Leap Winery Cabernet
Vall Llach "Idus" DOQ Priorat

10 - HENKE WINERY

2008 Chardonnay
2008 Riesling
2006 Sparkling Chardonnay
2008 Vin De Rouge
2007 Cabernet Franc
2007 Merlot
2008 Vendange A Trois
NV Norton

Notes:.....

11 - VALLEY VINEYARDS

2008 Ohio River Valley Estate Cabernet Franc
2007 Ohio River Valley Estate Seyval Blanc
2009 Ohio River Valley Estate Cabernet Franc Rosé
2009 Ohio River Valley Estate Vidal Blanc
2009 Ohio River Valley Estate Red Reflections
N/V Champagne
2007 Ohio River Valley Estate Ice Wine of Vidal Blanc
Honey Mead

Notes:.....

12 - DISTEFANO WINERY

2009 Sauvignon Blanc
2005 Meritage
2005 Sogno Cabernet Franc
2005 Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

12 - FRANK FAMILY VINEYARDS

2008 Napa Valley Chardonnay
2006 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Napa Valley Zinfandel

Notes:.....

13 - CANNONBALL

2006 Cannonball Cabernet Sauvignon
2005 Perfecta Merlot, Napa Valley

Notes:.....

13 - REYNOLDS FAMILY WINERY

2005 Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Stags Leap Merlot
2005 Stags Leap Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

14 - MCNAB RIDGE

2009 Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Chardonnay
2009 French Colombard
2007 Petite Sirah
2007 Merlot
2006 Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
2009 Syrah
2007 Zinzilla Zinfandel

Notes:.....

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TASTING NOTES

15 - BODEGA BENEGAS
2007 Don Tiburcio
2008 Benegas Malbec Estate
2007 Benegas Finca Libertad
2006 Benegas Lynch Cabernet Franc

Notes:.....

15 - LONGBOARD VINEYARDS
2007 Longboard Sauvignon Blanc Russian River
2007 Longboard Pinot Noir Russian River
2007 Longboard Dakine Merlot Russian River
2005 Longboard Syrah Russian River

Notes:.....

16 - TARRICA WINE CELLARS
2009 Tarrica Sauvignon Blanc Paso Robles
2009 Tarrica Pinot Gris Paso Robles
2008 Tarrica Chardonnay Paso Robles
2008 Tarrica Pinot Noir Monterey
2007 Tarrica Merlot Paso Robles
2008 Tarrica Zinfandel Paso Robles
2007 Tarrica Cabernet Sauvignon Paso Robles
2008 Tarrica Riesling Central Coast

Notes:.....

17 - VINTNER SELECT IMPORTS
2007 Barraud Macon Chaintre Les Pierres Polies
2008 Gerard Boulay Sancerre
2004 Domaine Cady St. Aubin Les Varennes
2007 Gerard Raphet Bourgogne Rouge
2007 Clos du Mont Olivet Cotes du Rhone Varene
2007 Mas de Gourgonnier Les Baux de Provence
2008 La Sauvageonne Les Ruffes
2006 Chateau Bellevue Fronsac

Notes:.....

> **"WINE** is no different than beer. Nobody is asking you to take an exam. Taste the wines and see what you like."
>
> –Charlie Meeker,
> The Meeker Vineyard,
> 2009 Honorary Chair

18 - GRUET WINERY
NV Gruet Brut
NV Gruet Blanc de Noir
NV Gruet Demi-Sec
NV Gruet Rosé

Notes:.....

18 - MONTECASTELLI SELECTIONS
2009 Clava Sauvignon Blanc
2009 Vina Quintay Sauvignon Blanc
2009 Clava Pinot Noir
2008 Vina Quintay Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

19 - ONE WORLD, SEVEN SISTERS
2008 One World Shiraz
2009 One World Chenin Blanc
2008 Seven Sisters Bukettraube
2009 Seven Sisters Sauvignon Blanc

Notes:.....

19 - RAINIER WINE
2008 Mad Housewife White Zinfandel
2008 Mad Housewife Chardonnay
2008 Mad Housewife Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Mad Housewife Merlot

Notes:.....

20 - PRECEPT WINE BRANDS
2007 Waterbrook Chardonnay
2006 Waterbrook Melange Noir
2007 Pine & Post Chardonnay
2006 House Wine Red
2007 Primarius Pinot Noir
2008 Washington Hills LH Riesling

Notes:.....

21 - OLIVER WINERY
Oliver Soft Red
Oliver Soft White
Oliver Soft Rosé
Oliver Camelot Mead
Oliver Watermelon
Oliver Mango
Oliver Black Cherry
Oliver Sangria Classic

Notes:.....

22 - VILLA SAN JULIETTE
2007 Villa San Juliette Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Villa San Juliette Merlot
2007 Villa San Juliette Petite Sirah
2007 Villa San Juliette Chorum
2008 Villa San Juliette Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Villa San Juliette Fat Monk Riesling

Notes:.....

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TASTING NOTES

23 - DOLE/MIDWEST PEARS

24 - RENWOOD WINERY
2006 Old Vine Zinfandel
2007 Orange Muscat
2006 Red Label Zinfandel
2005 Red Label Syrah
2006 Red Label Barbera
2007 Red Label Viognier

Notes:.....

25 - ELK CREEK VINEYARDS
2007 Syrah
2007 Sangiovese
2007 Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Vidal Blanc
2008 Chardonnay
2008 Riesling
2009 Pomegranate
2009 Blackberry

Notes:.....

26 - MONTGOMERY INN/KLOSTERMAN BAKERY

27 - MOET HENNESSY
2007 Newton Red Label Chardonnay
2006 Newton Red Label Claret
2009 Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc
NV Domaine Chandon Riche
2006 Numanthia, Numanthia
2007 Domaine Chandon Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

28 - 585 WINE PARTNERS
2008 Pink Truck
2007 Picket Fence Chardonnay
2007 Picket Fence Pinot Noir
2008 Steelhead Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Steelhead Zinfandel
2008 Bivio Italia Pinot Grigio
2008 Green Truck Petite Sirah
2008 White Truck Chardonnay, Un-Oaked

Notes:.....

29 - GOELET WINE ESTATES
2006 Clos Du Val Cabernet Sauvignon
2005 Clos Du Val Merlot
2007 Clos Du Val Carneros Chardonnay
2006 Clos Du Val Carneros Pinot Noir
2008 Kato Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Domaine De Nizas AOC Red
NV Taltarni Brut Tache
2006 Taltarni T-Series Shiraz

Notes:.....

30 - BENTON-LANE WINERY
2008 Benton-Lane Pinot Gris
2008 Benton-Lane Estate Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

30 - TRUCHARD VINEYARDS
2008 Truchard Roussand
2007 Truchard Chardonnay
2006 Truchard Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

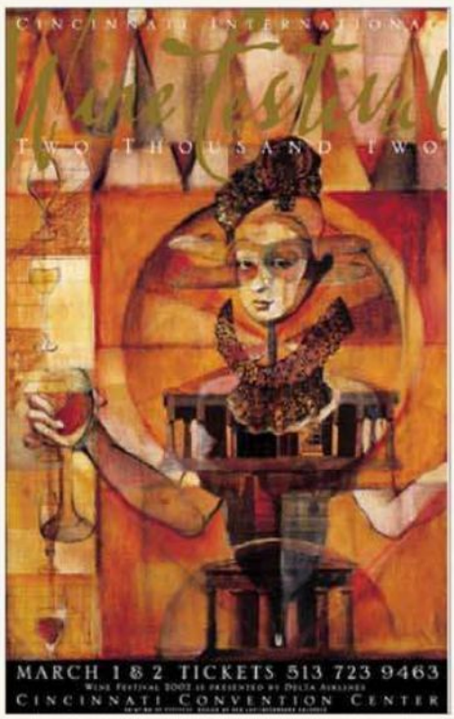
31 - MARS/DOVE NOVELTIES

32 - CLINE CELLARS
2008 Cline Pinot Gris
2008 Cline Viognier
2009 Cline Mourvedre Rose Ancient Vines
2008 Cline Zinfandel Ancient Vines
2007 Cline Mourvedre Ancient Vines
2008 Cline Cashmere Rhone Blend
2007 Cline Cool Climate Syrah
2005 Late Harvest Mourvedre

Notes:.....

33 - THE MEEKER VINEYARD
2005 Meeker Four Kings, Bordeaux Blend
2005 Meeker Winemaker's Handprint Merlot
2005 Meeker FroZin Zinfandel Dessert Wine
2008 Pacific Wine Works Gewurztraminer
2008 Pacific Wine Works Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Lobster Cove Wine Works Chardonnay
NV Roller Coaster Red, Red Blend

Notes:.....



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TASTING NOTES

34 - DR. LOOSEN
2007 Villa Wolf Pinot Gris
2008 Dr. L Riesling
2008 Dr. Loosen 'Blue Slate' Kabinett
2007 Dr. Loosen Riesling Eiswein

Notes:.....

34 - MINER FAMILY WINERY
2008 Simpson Vineyard Viognier
2007 Napa Chardonnay
2006 Oakville Cabernet Sauvignon
2005 Oracle

Notes:.....

35 - AMERICAN RICE - BERTOLLI/ CARAPELLI OLIVE OILS

36 - AVENIU BRANDS
2008 Artesa Carneros Chardonnay
2007 Artesa Carneros Pinot Noir
2005 Artesa Elements
2005 Artesa Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Ridgeline Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Vina Zaco Tempranillo
NV Codorniu Sparkling Pinot Noir
2004 Sasso Al Poggio Toscana

Notes:.....

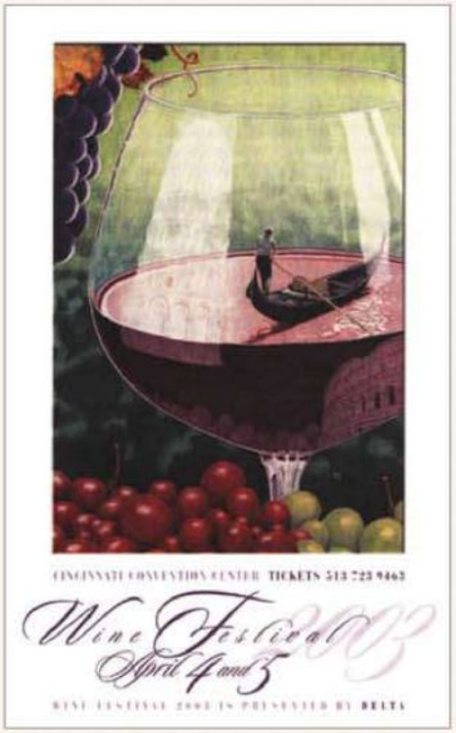
37 - SNAPPLE

38 - CASTORO CELLARS-PASO ROBLES CALIF
2006 Castoro Cellars Cabernet, Paso Robles
2008 Castoro Cellars Central Coast Chardonnay
2008 Castoro Cellars Muscat Canelli
2006 Castoro Cellars Blind Faith Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

38 - ROBERT KACHER SELECTIONS
2008 Tariquet Classic
2008 Tariquet Sauvignon Blanc
2009 Inacayal Pinot Grigio
2007 Mas de Grenache/Syrah

Notes:.....



39 - THE HESS COLLECTION
2008 Hess Su'Skol Vineyard Chardonnay
2007 Hess Allomi Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Hess Select Chardonnay
2007 Hess Select Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Hess Select Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Hess Allomi Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Peter Lehmann Clancy's Red
2009 Peter Lehmann Layers White

Notes:.....

40 - CAPE CLASSICS
2009 Beyond Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Kanu Chenin Blanc
2009 Indaba Chardonnay
2009 Mulderbosch Rosé
2008 Indaba Shiraz
2007 Excelsior Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Kanonkop Kadette
2009 JamJar Sweet Shiraz

Notes:.....

41 - WINE CELLAR INNOVATIONS

42 - QUINTESSENTIAL WINES
NV New Age White
2009 Elsa Bianchi Malbec
2009 Elsa Bianchi Torrontes
2006 Bianchi Famiglia Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Pillar Box White
2007 Pillar Box Red
2008 Two Angels Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Tinto Figuero 4 Month Ribera del Duero

Notes:.....

43 - PINE RIDGE WINERY
2007 Forefront Cabernet Sauvignon by Pine Ridge Vineyards
2008 Forefront Pinot Noir by Pine Ridge Vineyards
2008 Pine Ridge Vineyards Chenin Blanc Viognier
2005 Pine Ridge Vineyards Fortis Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

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TASTING NOTES

"**CINCINNATI IS A DYNAMIC CITY**, with lots of excellent restaurants and wines, and it's wonderful to have the opportunity to meet with people who share those pleasures. I'm thrilled and humbled to be invited to be the Honorary Chair." —*Michael Mondavi, Founder and Coach, Folio Fine Wine Partners*

43 - WINE WAVE

2006 Maraia Barbera del Monferrato
2008 Dolcetto d'Alba Madonna di Como
2008 Gavi
2008 Moscato D' Asti Zagara

Notes:.....

44 - EBERLE WINERY

2008 Eberle Estate Chardonnay
2008 Eberle Viognier, Mill Road Vineyard
2007 Eberle Syrah, Steinbeck Vineyard
2007 Eberle, Vineyard Selection, Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Eberle Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Eberle Zinfandel, Steinbeck Vineyard

Notes:.....

45 - MT OLIVE PICKLES

46 - EPIPHANY CELLARS & FORTRESS VINEYARDS

2008 Fortress Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Fortress Petite Sirah
2007 Fortress Finale
2008 Epiphany Cellars Grenache Blanc
2008 Epiphany Cellars Dry Riesling
2006 Epiphany Cellars Gypsy Red
2006 Epiphany Cellars Revelation Red
2006 Epiphany Petite Sirah

Notes:.....

47 - FESS PARKER WINERY

2009 Fess Parker SBC Riesling
2008 Fess Parker SBC Viognier
2007 Fess Parker Ashley's Vineyard Chardonnay
2007 Fess Parker SBC Pinot Noir
2007 Fess Parker Ashley's Vineyard Pinot Noir
2007 Fess Parker Bien Nacido Pinot Noir
2006 Fess Parker SBC Syrah
2006 Fess Parker Big Easy Syrah

Notes:.....

48 - MICHAEL~DAVID WINERY

2007 7 Deadly Zins
2007 6th Sense Syrah
2007 Petite Petit
2006 Earthquake Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Earthquake Zinfandel
2008 7 Heavenly Chards
2006 Earthquake Petite Sirah
2006 Earthquake Syrah

Notes:.....

49 - MARTIN RAY WINERY

2007 Martin Ray Russian River Valley Chardonnay
2007 Martin Ray Napa Mendocino Sonoma Cabernet
2007 Martin Ray Santa Barbara Pinot Noir
2008 Angeline Reserve Pinot Noir
2008 Angeline California Pinot Noir
2007 Angeline Sonoma Chardonnay

Notes:.....

50 - CLICK WINE GROUP

2007 Fat Bastard Chardonnay
2007 Fat Bastard Pinot Noir
2007 Root 1 Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Root 1 Chardonnay
2008 Root 1 Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Root 1 Carmenere
2008 Clean Slate Riesling
2008 High Note Malbec

Notes:.....

51 - ROMBAUER VINEYARDS

2006 Carneros Merlot
2006 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2004 Diamond Selection Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Carneros Chardonnay
2007 Zinfandel (60% Sierra Foothills, 40% N. California

Notes:.....

52 - DON SEBASTIANI AND SONS

2007 Smoking Loon Syrah
2007 Flock Pinot Noir
2007 Flock Old Vine Zinfandel
2007 Crusher Petite Sirah
2008 Crusher Viognier
2008 Smoking Loon Chardonnay
2005 B-Side Cabernet
2007 Aquinas Cabernet

Notes:.....

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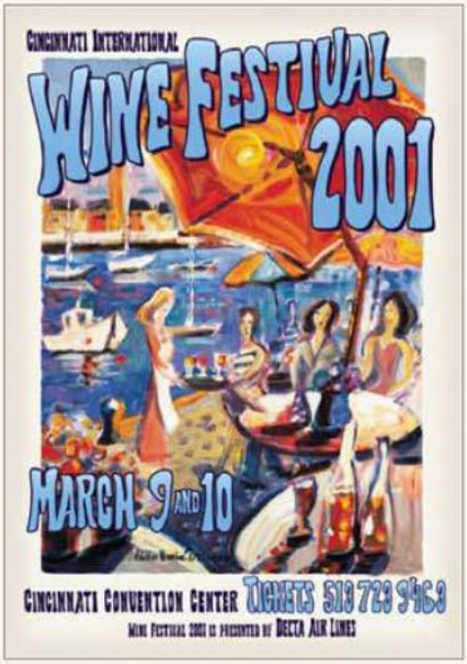

53 - FERRANTE WINERY
2008 Golden Bunches Dry Riesling
2008 GRV Riesling
2008 GRV Pinot Grigio
2007 Vidal Ice Wine

Notes:.....

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53 - SUN WINE IMPORTS
Petrognano- Montevago
Petrognano- Chianti Riserva
Petrognano- Chianti
Le Vigne di Alice- Extra Dry-Prosecco

Notes:.....

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54 - DUCKHORN WINE COMPANY
2008 Duckhorn Vineyards Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Decoy Napa Valley Merlot
2007 Decoy Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Decoy Napa Valley Red Wine
2006 Goldeneye Anderson Valley Pinot Noir
2007 Duckhorn Vineyards Napa Valley Merlot
2006 Paraduxx Napa Valley Red Wine

Notes:.....

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55 - GEORGE E. DELALLO CO.

56 - DOMINIO BUENAVISTA
2007 Veleta Nolados
2007 Veleta Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Veleta Tempranillo
2009 Veleta Tempranillo Rosé
2009 Veleta Vijiriega
NV Veleta Sweet Melodies
2006 Veleta Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Veleta Tempranillo

Notes:.....

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57 - VINAMERICAS SELECTIONS LLC
2004 Panuelo Rojo
2007 Ortea
2007 Idrias Abiego
2007 Urbina White
2007 Urbina Tempranillo
2004 Urbina Crianza
2004 Panuelo Azul
2007 Terramaior

Notes:.....

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58 - MIRASSOU
2008 Mirassou Chardonnay
2008 Mirassou Pinot Noir
2007 Mirassou Merlot
2008 Mirassou Sauvignon Blanc

Notes:.....

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58 - WILLIAM HILL
2007 William Hill Chardonnay
2006 William Hill Merlot
2008 William Hill CC Chardonnay
2008 William Hill CC Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

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59 - LOUIS M. MARTINI WINERY
2007 Louis Martini Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Louis Martini Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Louis Martini Chardonnay
2006 Loius Martini Gnarly Vines Zinfandel

Notes:.....

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59 - MAC MURRAY
2008 Mac Murray Pinot Noir
2008 Mac Murray Pinot Gris
2008 Mac Murray Chardonnay

Notes:.....

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60 - ALAMOS/GASCON
2009 Don Miguel Gascon Malbec
2008 Alamos Chardonnay
2008 Alamos Torrentos
2008 Alamos Malbec

Notes:.....

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60 - ECCO DOMANI/MASO CANALI
2008 Ecco Domani Pinot Grigo
2008 Ecco Domani Merlot
2008 Ecco Domani Pinot Noir
2008 Maso Canali Pinot Grigio

Notes:.....

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61 - BAREFOOT WINERY
Barefoot Pinot Noir
Barefoot Merlot
Barefoot Zinfandel
Barefoot Sauvignon Blanc
Barefoot Pinot Grigio
Barefoot Moscato
Barefoot Bubbly Brut
Barefoot Bubbly Moscato Spumante

Notes:.....

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62 - KROGER DELI

63 - WINERY EXCHANGE

2007 Espuela Del Gaucho Malbec
2007 Hedgeline Riesling
2007 Parker's Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Arrow Creek Chardonnay
2007 Zinopolis Zinfandel
2007 Espuela Del Gaucho Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Escher Haus Riesling
2007 Hunter's Grove Chardonnay

Notes:.....

64 - ROW ELEVEN WINE COMPANY

2007 Row Eleven Pinot Noir California Vinas 3
2006 Row Eleven Pinot Noir Santa Maria Valley
2007 Row Eleven Pinot Noir Russian River Valley
2005 Stratton Lummis Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Stratton Lummis Chardonnay
2007 Civello White Wine California

Notes:.....

65 - ROBERT OATLEY VINEYARDS

2007 Robert Oatley Chardonnay
2007 Robert Oatley Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot
2007 Robert Oatley Shiraz
2008 Robert Oatley Pinot Grigio
2009 Robert Oatley Rose of Sangiovese
2008 Robert Oatley Sauvignon Blanc

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66 - REDWOOD CREEK WINERY
2008 Redwood Creek Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Redwood Creek Chardonnay
2008 Redwood Creek Merlot
2008 Redwood Creek Pinot Grigio
2008 Redwood Creek Pinot Noir
2008 Redwood Creek Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Redwood Creek White Zinfandel
2007 Redwood Creek Lodi Zinfandel

Notes:.....

67 - FREI BROTHERS
2008 Frei Brothers Chardonnay
2008 Frei Brothers Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Frei Brothers Zinfandel
2007 Frei Brothers Merlot

Notes:.....

67 - GHOST PINES/WHITEHAVEN
2007 Ghost Pines Chardonnay
2006 Ghost Pines Merlot
2008 Whitehaven Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Whitehaven Pinot Noir

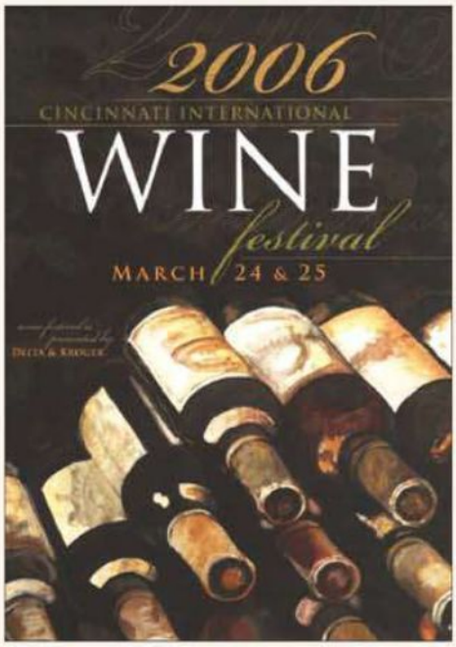
Notes:.....

68 - MARTIN CODAX/LAS ROCAS
2008 Martin Codax Albarino
2006 Martin Codax Rioja
2007 Las Rocas Garnacha
2006 Las Rocas Garnacha Old Vines

Notes:.....

68 - MCWILLIAMS
2007 McWilliams Chardonnay
2007 McWilliams Shiraz
2007 McWilliams Merlot
2007 McWilliams Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....



69 - JAQK CELLARS
2008 Charmed Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Her Majesty Chardonnay
2007 Bone Dance Merlot
2007 22 Black Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Pearl Handle Chardonnay
2007 Soldiers of Fortune Shiraz
2007 Black Clover Merlot
2007 High Roller Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

70 - TGIC IMPORTERS
2007 Montes Cabernet/ Carmenere (Chile) (Colchagua)
2008 Montes Sauvignon Blanc (Chile) (Leyda Valley)
2006 Bodega Norton Reserve Malbec (Argentina) (Mendoza)
2007 Pascal Toso Reserve Malbec (Argentina) (Mendoza)
2007 Santa Ema Reserve Merlot (Chile) (Maipo Valley)
2006 Achaval Ferrer Quimera (Argentina) (Mendoza)
2006 Montes Alpha Syrah (Chile) (Colchagua)
2008 Pascal Toso Torrontes (Mendoza)

Notes:.....

71 - 72 - KROGER DELI

73 - KERMIT LYNCH WINE MERCHANT
2008 Chateau Graville-Lacoste, Graves Blanc
2008 Domaine de Fontsainte, Corbieres, Gris de Gris
2007 Dm. Cherisey, Puligny Montrachet
2007 Clos La Coutale, Cahors
2006 Domaine Les Pallieres, Gigondas
2007 Guy Breton, Morgon

Notes:.....

74 - WINE SMITH CUSTOM CELLARS

75 - CHALK HILL ESTATE VINEYARDS & WINERY
2007 Estate Bottled Chardonnay
2006 Estate Bottled Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Estate Bottled Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Estate Bottled Merlot

Notes:.....

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75 - HOEPLER GMBH

2008 Gruener Veltliner
2008 Pinot Blanc
2004 Blaufraenkisch
2005 Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

76 - LAUREATE IMPORTS COMPANY, INC.

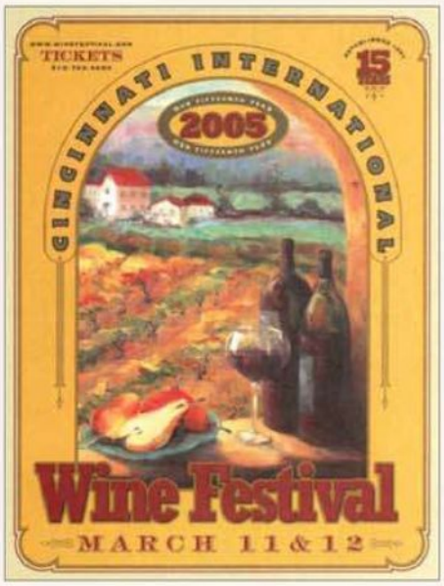
2008 Traviata Ribolla Gialla
2007 Traviata Pinot Grigio
2006 Traviata Merlot
2007 Traviata Chardonnay
2008 Avia Pinot Grigio
2008 Avia Pinot Noir
2008 Avia Riesling
2008 Avia Merlot

Notes:.....

77 - TERLATO WINES INTERNATIONAL

2005 Rutherford Hill Merlot
2008 Markham Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Chimney Rock Cabernet Sauvignon Stag's Leap
2008 Cuvaison Chardonnay
N/V Seven Daughters Winemakers Blend
N/V Santa Margherita Prosecco

Notes:.....



78 - BANFI

2008 Rosa Regale
2008 Banfi San Angelo Pinot Grigio
2005 Banfi Chianti Classico Riserva
2007 Palo Alto Reserve Red
2007 Marques de Casa Concha Carmenere
2007 Casillero del Diablo Privada Riserva
2007 Trivento Amado Sur
2008 Novas Chardonnay

Notes:.....

79 - BILTMORE WINES

2008 Biltmore Estate Chardonnay
Biltmore Century White
Biltmore Century Red
2008 Biltmore Reserve Pinot Noir
2007 Biltmore Reserve Passport
Biltmore Estate Methode Champenoise Blanc de Noir
Biltmore Estate Methode Champenoise Pas de Deux
Biltmore Pinot Grigio

Notes:.....

80 - HECK ESTATES

2006 Valley of the Moon Zinfandel
2008 Valley of the Moon Pinot Blanc
2006 Kenwood Jack London Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Kenwood Sonoma Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Kenwood Sonoma Merlot
2007 Kenwood Russian River Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

81 - MARTINI & ROSSI

Martini & Rossi Sparkling Rosé
Martini & Rossi Prosecco
Martini & Rossi Asti
Martini & Rossi Bianco

Notes:.....

81 - MEIER'S WINE CELLARS

Meier's Walleye White
Meier's Sangria
Meier's Blackberry
Meier's # 44 Ruby Port

Notes:.....

82 - BARILLA AMERICA, INC

83 - ROSEMOUNT ESTATE, DEVIL'S LAIR

2008 Colores Del Sol Malbec Reserva, Argentina
2007 Devil's Lair Chardonnay, Australia
2006 Devil's Lair Cabernet Sauvignon, Australia
2007 Rosemount Estate, SR, Chardonnay Mudgee, Australia
2006 Rosemount Estate, SR Cab Sav Coonawarra, Australia
2006 Rosemount Estate, SR Shiraz McLaren Vale Australia
2006 Rosemount Estate, SR GSM, McLaren Vale, Australia
2006 Rosemount Estate, Syrah, Balmoral, Australia

Notes:.....

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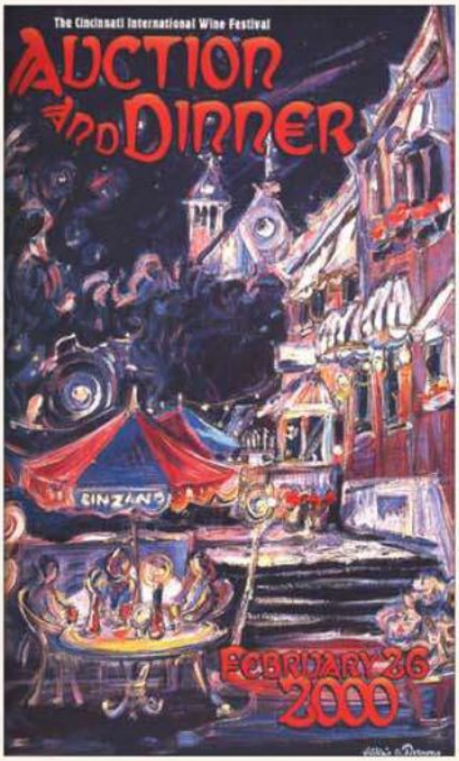

84 - KOBRAND

2007 Benziger Family Sangiacomo Vineyard Chardonay
2008 Craggy Range, Sauvignon Blanc, Martinborough
2007 Abadia Retuerta, Rivola, Sardon de Duero, Spain
2007 Villa Nozzole, Chianti Classico

Notes:.....

84 - PURPLE WINE COMPANY

2008 Mark West Pinot Noir
2007 Avalon Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Avalon California Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Bex Riesling

Notes:.....

85 - BONTERRA/ LITTLE BLACK DRESS WINES

2007 Bonterra Chardonnay
2008 Bonterra Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Bonterra Merlot
2007 Bonterra Zinfandel
2008 Little Black Dress Pinot Grigio
2008 Little Black Dress Pinot Noir
2007 Little Black Dress Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Little Black Dress Chardonnay

Notes:.....

86 - KORBEL

NV Korbel Brut
NV Korbel Natural
NV Korbel Extra Dry
NV Korbel Brut Rosé
NV Korbel Sweet Rosé
NV Korbel Banc de Noir
NV Korbel Chardonnay
NV Korbel Organic

Notes:.....

87 - NANCY'S (HEINZ)

88 - ESTANCIA/WILD HORSE

2008 Estancia Riesling, Monterey
2006 Estancia Reserve Chardonnay, Monterey
2008 Estancia Pinot Noir, Monterey
2006 Estancia Reserve Red Meritage, Paso Robles
2007 Estancia Cabernet Sauvignon, Paso Robles
2008 Wild Horse Chardonnay, Central Coast
2008 Wild Horse Pinot Noir, Central Coast
2006 Wild Horse Cabernet Sauvignon, Paso Robles

Notes:.....

89 - FRANCISCAN/ROBERT MONDAVI

2007 Franciscan Chardonnay, Napa
2005 Franciscan Merlot, Napa
2006 Franciscan Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa
2006 Mt. Veeder Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa
2007 Robert Mondavi Winery Chardonnay, Napa
2007 Robert Mondavi Winery Fume Blanc, Napa
2008 Solaire by Robert Mondavi Pinot Noir, Santa Lucia
2006 Robert Mondavi Winery Cabernet Sauvignon, Napa

Notes:.....

90 - KIM CRAWFORD/NOBILO

2008 Kim Crawford Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough
2008 Kim Crawford Unoaked Chardonnay, New Zealand
2008 Kim Crawford Pinot Noir, Marlborough
2008 Nobilo Icon Sauvignon Blanc, Marlborough
2008 Nobilo Icon Pinot Noir, Marlborough
2007 Diseno Malbec, Argentina
2007 Red Guitar Tempranillo/Garnacha, Navarra
2007 Jackson Triggs Vidal Ice Wine, Niagara

Notes:.....

91 - CLASSICO (HEINZ)

92 - STE MICHELLE WINE ESTATES

NV Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte Brut
NV Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte Rosé
2005 Columbia Crest Reserve Walter Clore Red
2007 Chateau Ste Michelle Indian Wells Chardonnay
2007 Chateau Ste Michelle Indian Wells Cabernet Sauvignon
2005 Marchese Antinori Chianti Classico Reserva
2008 Erath Pinot Noir
2008 Erath Pinot Gris

Notes:.....

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–Stephanie Gallo, E. & J. Gallo Winery, 2008 Honorary Chair

93 - PENFOLDS

2007 Penfolds, Koonunga Hill, Shiraz/ Cabernet, Australia
2008 Penfolds Thomas Hyland Chardonnay, Adelaide, Australia
2006 Penfolds, Shiraz, Kalimna, Bin #28, Australia
2006 Penfolds, Shiraz/Grenache/Mourvedre, Bin #138, Australia
2006 Penfolds, Cabernet/Shiraz, Bin #389, Australia
2006 Penfolds, Cabernet Sauvignon, Bin #707, Australia
2007 Penfolds, Shiraz/Mourvedre, Bin #2, Australia
NV Penfolds Club Tawny

Notes:.....

94 - BERINGER

2005 Beringer Napa Valley Cabernet
2008 Souverain Alexander Valley Chardonnay
2007 Etude Carneros Estate Grown Pinot Noir
2008 St. Clement Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Stags' Leap Winery Napa Valley Petite Syrah
2006 Chateau St. Jean Sonoma County Merlot
2009 Etude Rosé Carneros
2008 Taz Santa Barbara Pinot Gris

Notes:.....

95 - RODNEY STRONG WINE ESTATES

2008 Rodney Strong Charlotte's Home Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Rodney Strong Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Rodney Strong Russian River Valley Pinot Noir
2007 Rodney Strong Knotty Vine Zinfandel
2008 Rodney Strong Chalk Hill Chardonnay
2006 Rodney Strong Sonoma County Merlot
2007 Davis Bynum Russian River Valley Chardonnay
2007 Davis Bynum Russian River Valley Pinot Noir

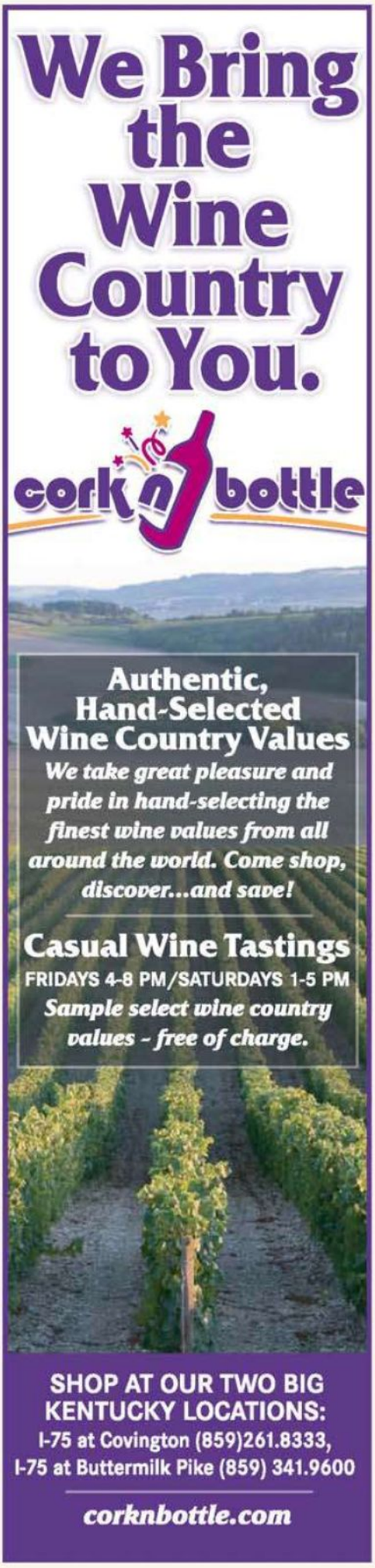
Notes:.....

96 - MUSCO EARLY CALIFORNIA/LAND OF LAKES

97 - FIRELANDS/SPECIALTY WINES

2008 Firelands Pinot Grigio
2005 Firelands Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Firelands Gewurztraminer
2007 Firelands Ice Wine
2006 Listra Rosso Di Toscana
2004 Castel Diruto Tenuta Fontino
2007 Vernaccia di San Gimigano
2008 Contero Moscato D'Asti
2003 Armone Della Valpolicella
2003 Barolo Cannubi Tenuta Carretta

Notes:.....



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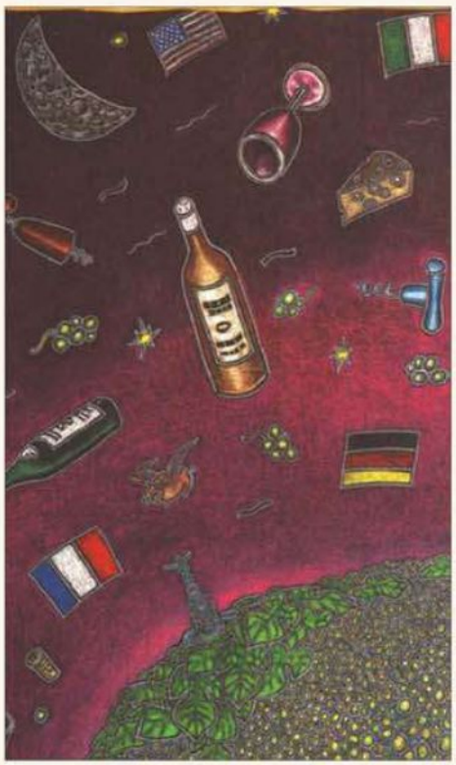

98 - VINTAGE POINT

2008 Layer Cake Shiraz
2008 Layer Cake Malbec
2007 Layer Cake Primitivo
2005 Luna Merlot
2007 Luna Freakout
2005 Hidden Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Barossa Jack Shiraz
2008 Luna Pinot Grigio

Notes:.....

99 - THE WINE GROUP

2008 Montecillo Albarino
2005 Montecillo Crianza
2009 Cupcake Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Cupcake Chardonnay
2007 Concannon Pinot Noir
2007 Concannon Petite Sirah
2008 A-Mano Pinot Grigio
2007 A-Mano Primitivo

Notes:.....

100 - FREDERICK WILDMAN & SONS. LTD.

2007 Broquel Torrontes
2007 Broquel Malbec
2006 Santi Valpolicella
1997 Paul Jaboulet Parallel 45 Rouge
2008 Rapitala Piano Maltese
2007 Monaci Salice Salentino Liante

Notes:.....

101 - ORTEGA

102 - JOSEPH CARR

2007 Joseph Carr Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Joseph Carr Merlot
2008 Joseph Carr Sauvignon Blanc
2006 Josh Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Josh Cellars Chardonnay

Notes:.....

103 - VACA/HOGUE/HAYMAN & HILL

2008 Vaca Chardonnay, California
2006 Vaca Cabernet Sauvignon, California
2007 Hayman & Hill Interchange White, Santa Barbara
2006 Hayman & Hill Red Meritage, Monterey
2008 Hogue Late Harvest Riesling, Columbia Valley
2007 Hogue Chardonnay, Columbia Valley
2006 Genesis Merlot, Columbia Valley
2006 Genesis Syrah, Columbia Valley

Notes:.....

104 - 90.9 FM WGUC

105 - CLOS DU BOIS/BLACKSTONE

2007 Clos du Bois Pinot Noir, Sonoma
2007 Clos du Bois Reserve Chardonnay, Russian River
2006 Clos du Bois Reserve Merlot, Alexander Valley
2006 Clos du Bois Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander
2006 Blackstone Rubric Red Blend, Sonoma
2007 Blackstone Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Sonoma
2007 Blackstone Pinot Noir, California
2007 Blackstone Merlot, California

Notes:.....

106 - NAPA RIDGE WINERY

2006 Napa Ridge Napa Valley Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Napa Ridge Napa Valley Chardonnay
2007 Napa Ridge Napa Valley Pinot Noir
2007 Napa Ridge Napa Valley Petite Sirah
2007 Napa Ridge Napa Valley Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Napa Ridge Napa Valley Merlot
2008 Harlow Ridge Pinot Grigio
2008 Coastal Ridge Riesling

Notes:.....

107 - PKNT WINERY

2008 PKNT Gold Carmenere
2009 PKNT Gold Chardonnay
2008 Stonehead Pinot Noir
2008 Stonehead Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

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108 - ANTARES WINE COMPANY 1

2008 Stonehead Sauvignon Blanc '08, Maipo Valley, Chile
2008 Stonehead Pinot Noir, Maipo Valley, Chile
2008 Stonehead Carmenere Maipo Valley, Chile
2008 Motos Liberty Chardonnay California
2008 Motos Liberty Pinot Noir California
2007 Ernst Gouws & Co Pinotage South Africa

Notes:.....

109 - ANTARES WINE COMPANY 2

2008 Masked Rider Cabernet Sauvignon California
2008 Masked Rider Gunsmoke Red
2007 Masked Rider The Fiddler Zinfandel
2007 Masked Rider Petite Syrah California
2007 Patianna Sauvignon Blanc Estate Grown
2005 Patianna Syrah, Fairbarn Ranch
NV Wild Hare Winery Chardonnay California
NV Wild Hare Winery Pinot Grigio, California

Notes:.....

110 - FILUS WINERY

2007 Filus Malbec Reserva
2007 Filus Malbec
2008 Tierra Brisa Malbec
2008 Tierra Brisa Merlot
2007 Tierra Brisa Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Tierra Brisa Chardonnay

Notes:.....

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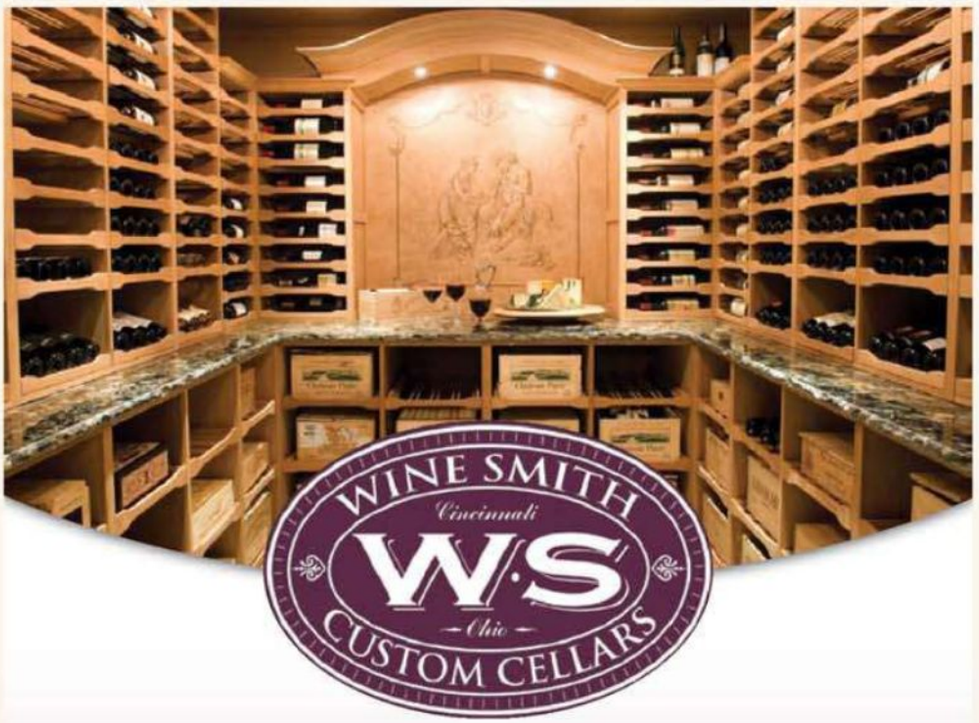

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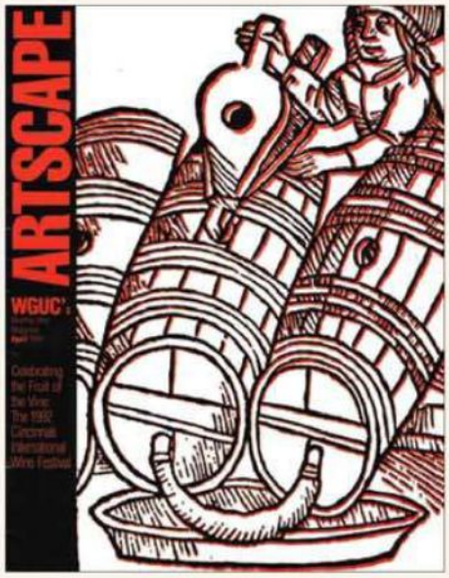

111 - GNARLY HEAD

2008 Gnarly Head Pinot Grigio
2006 Gnarly Head Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Gnarly Head Pinot Noir
2007 Gnarly Head Chardonnay
2008 Loredona Riesling
2007 337 Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 181 Merlot
2007 Brazin Old Vine Zinfandel

Notes:.....

112 - DUPLIN WINE CELLARS

NV Duplin Hatteras Red
NV Duplin Blackberry
NV Duplin Scuppernong
NV Duplin Scuppernong Blush

Notes:.....

112 - RIONDO USA

NV Riondo Prosecco Spago Nero
2009 Riondo Pinot Grigio
2008 Riondo Pianello Rosso
NV Riondo Spago Zante

Notes:.....

113 - CADBURY BLACK AND GREEN CHOCOLATE

114 - BURNET RIDGE, INC.

2006 Purple Trillium
2006 Pinot Noir
2006 Zinfandel
2006 Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Cabernet Franc
2007 Purple Trillium Barrel Sample
2007 Cabernet Sauvignon Barrel Sample
2007 Zinfandel Barrel Sample

Notes:.....

115 - FOLIE A DEUX / MENAGE A TROIS

2008 Folie a Deux Chardonnay
2007 Folie a Deux Merlot
2007 Folie a Deux Amador Zinfandel
2007 Folie a Deux Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Menage a Trois Red
2008 Menage a Trois White
2008 Menage a Trois Rosé
2008 Menage a Trois Chardonnay

Notes:.....

116 - NAPA CELLARS WINERY

2008 Napa Cellars Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Napa Cellars Chardonnay
2007 Napa Cellars Mount Veeder Chardonnay
2007 Napa Cellars Pinot Noir
2007 Napa Cellars Zinfandel
2007 Napa Cellars Merlot
2007 Napa Cellars Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Napa Cellars Stagecoach Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

117 - REBEL WINE COMPANY

2008 Newman's Own Pinot Grigio
2008 Newman's Own Chardonnay
2007 Newman's Own Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Bandit Pinot Grigio
2008 Bandit Chardonnay
2008 Bandit Cabernet Sauvignon
NV Bandit Sangria
2007 The Show Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

118 - TERRA D ORO / JARGON / SEAGLASS

2008 Terra d Oro Moscato
NV Terra d Oro Zinfandel Port
2007 Terra d Oro Deaver Vineyard Zinfandel
2007 Terra d Oro Estate Amador Zinfandel
2007 Terra d Oro Amador Barbera
2008 Terra d Oro Pinot Grigio
2009 Seaglass Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Jargon Pinot Noir

Notes:.....

119 - TRINCHERO NAPA VALLEY

2009 Trinchero Mary's Vineyard Sauvignon Blanc
2007 Trinchero Daybreak Block Merlot
2007 Trinchero Chicken Ranch Vineyard Merlot
2007 Trinchero Chicken Ranch Vineyard Cabernet Sauvigno
2007 Trinchero Mario's Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Trinchero Napa Valley Meritage
2007 Trinchero Cabernet Franc
2007 Trinchero Petit Verdot

Notes:.....

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120 - CARR'S AND KASHI CRACKERS

121 - FOLEY FAMILY WINES

2009 Clifford Bay Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Clifford Bay Pinot Noir
2004 Kuleto Estate Cabernet Sauvignon
2006 Sebastiani Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Sebastiani Russian River Un-Oaked Chardonnay
2007 Sebastiani Sonoma Chardonnay
2007 Three Rivers Red
2007 Lincourt Santa Rita Hills Chardonnay

Notes:.....

122 - REH KENDERMANN WINERY

2009 Black Tower Rivaner
2009 Black Tower Riesling
2009 Kendermann's Riesling
2008 Kendermann's Pinot Noir
2009 Carl Reh Riesling
2008 Carl Reh Sweet Red Wine - Dornfelder

Notes:.....

123 - ST. JAMES WINERY

Velvet Red
Velvet White
Blackberry
Strawberry
Peach
Pink Catawba
Vintner's Select Vignoles
Norton

Notes:.....

124 - THE KROGER MARKETPLACE

125 - ZENZEN WINES

2008 Peter Brum Vino Noire
2008 Peter Brum Bacchus
2008 Peter Brum Riesling
N/V Peter Brum Goldsparkler Sparkling Wine
2008 Dr. Zenzen Elite Pinot Noire
2008 Dr. Zenzen Elite Riesling

Notes:.....

126 - JOEL GOTT WINES

2008 Joel Gott Sauvignon Blanc California
2008 Joel Gott Riesling Columbia Valley, WA
2008 Joel Gott Chardonnay Monterey, CA
2007 Joel Gottl Red Blend Relative California
2007 Joel Gott Zinfandel California
2007 Joel Gott 815 Cabernet Sauvignon California

Notes:.....

127 - THE OTHER GUYS

2007 White Knight Viognier California
2007 Leese Fitch Chardonnay California
2007 Hey Mambo Swanky White California
2007 MooBuzz Pinot Noir California
2007 Hey Mambo Sultry Red California
2007 Plungerhead Zinfandel Dry Creek Valley, CA

Notes:.....

128 - PEET'S COFFEE AND TEA

129 - SHANNON RIDGE WINERY

2007 Shannon Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Shannon Ridge Wrangler Red
2008 Shannon Ridge Single Vineyard Roussanne
2008 Shannon Ridge Single Vineyard Viognier
2008 Shannon Ridge Ranch Collection Petite Sirah
2008 Shannon Ridge Two Bud Zinfandel
2008 Shannon Ridge Ranch Collection Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Shannon Ridge Ranch Collection Chardonnay

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TASTING NOTES

130 - HOOK & LADDER WINERY

2007 The Tillerman
2007 Pinot Noir
2006 Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Chardonnay
2006 Zinfandel
2008 Gewurztraminer

Notes:.....

.....

.....

131 - GRAETER'S ICE CREAM

132 - RAVENSWOOD WINERY

2007 Ravenswood Vintner's Blend Petite Sirah
2008 Ravenswood Vintner's Blend Chardonnay
2006 Ravenswood Napa Zinfandel
2006 Ravenswood Sonoma Merlot
2007 Ravenswood Teldeschi Zinfandel
2007 Ravenswood Big River Zinfandel
2007 Ravenswood Dickerson Zinfandel
2007 Ravenswood Sonoma Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

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133 - ROBERT HALL WINERY

2008 Terra Robles Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Terra Robles Chardonnay
2008 Terra Robles Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Robert Hall Viognier
2008 Robert Hall Sauvignon Blanc
2008 Robert Hall Orange Muscat
2007 Robert Hall Rhone de Robles
2007 Robert Hall Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes:.....

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.....

.....

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.....

.....

134 - CINCINNATI MAGAZINE

135 - MARZETTI DRESSINGS

136 - WINE STORAGE SPECIALISTS

137 - WEINGUT ROBERT WEIL

Notes:.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

138 - RIEDEL

139 - TERLATO WINES INTERNATIONAL

2005 Tangley Oaks Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Tangley Oaks Chardonnay
2006 Tangley Oaks Merlot
2006 Mazzoni Rosso Super Tuscan
2007 Terlato Family Vineyards Pinot Grigio
2007 Two Hands Gnarly Dudes

Notes:.....

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140 - CHATEAU POMIJE

2007 Steuben Semi Sweet Blush
2007 Nectar Kiss Sweet White Wine
2008 Seyval Blanc
2004 Late Harvest
2007 Cabernet Sauvignon
2007 Riesling

Notes:.....

A - KROGER CHEFS

B - MIDWEST CULINARY INSTITUTE

C - FOLIO FINE WINE PARTNERS

2006 Oberon Cabernet Sauvignon
2008 Isabel Mondavi Chardonnay
2006 Emblem Oso Vineyard
2006 Frescobaldi Nipozzano
2008 Laurenz Singing
2005 Palacios Remondo La Montesa
"M" by Michael Mondavi
2006 Frescobaldi Mormoreto

Notes:.....

D - CINCINNATI WINE FESTIVAL

E - GAMBLE FAMILY VINEYARDS

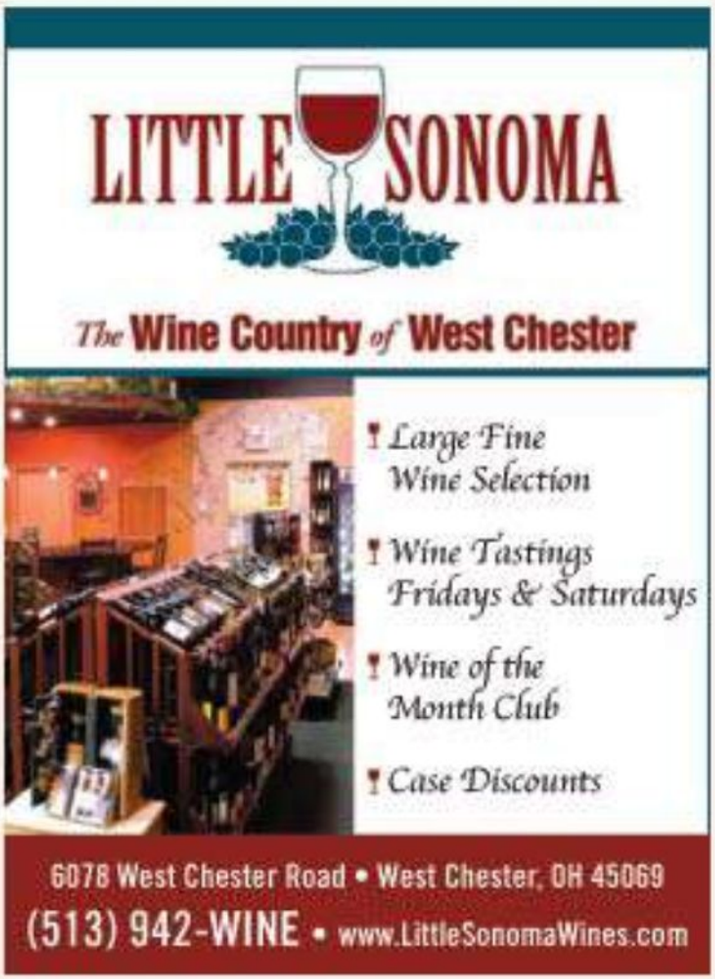
Notes:.....

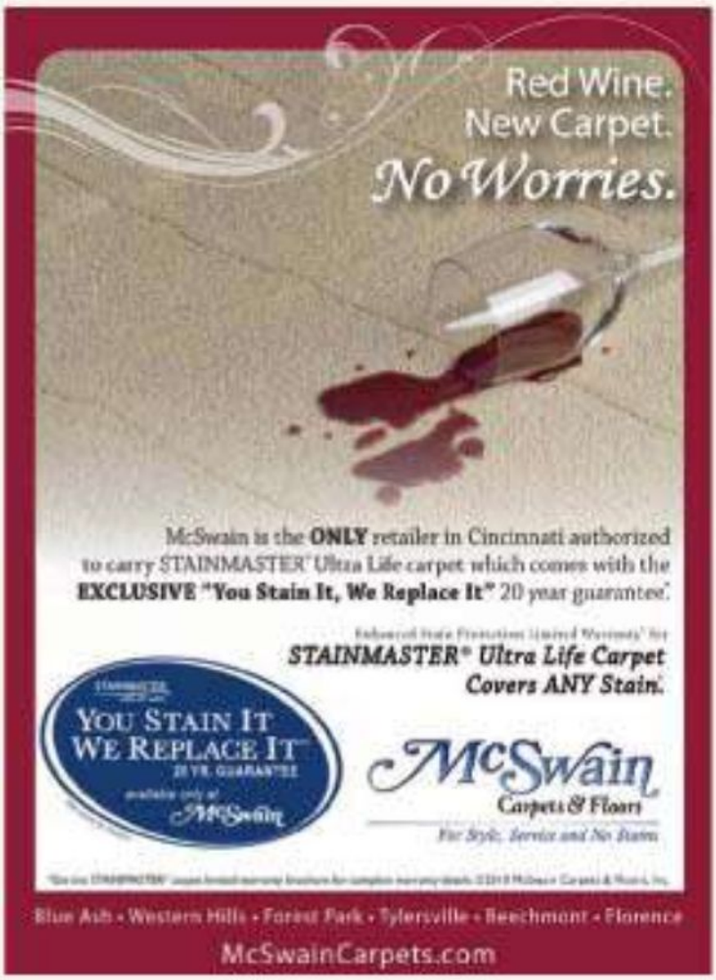
141 BULLY HILL VINEYARDS

NV Love My Goat Red
NV Goat White
NV Fish Market White
NV Meat Market Red
NV Sweet Walter Red

Notes:.....

142 - BRIX CHOCOLATE





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EXHIBITOR LIST

585 wine partners 28
90.9 FM WGUC 104
Acqua Panna/S. Pellegrino 1
Alamos/Gascon 60
American Rice - Bertolli/
Carapelli Olive Oils 35
Antares Wine Company 1 108
Antares Wine Company 2 109
Aveniu Brands 36
Banfi 78
Barefoot Winery 61
Barilla America, Inc. 82
Benton-Lane Winery 30
Beringer 94
Biltmore Wines 79
Bodega Benegas 15
Bonterra/ Little Black Dress Wines 85
Brix Chocolate 142
Bully Hill Vineyards 141
Burnet Ridge, Inc. 114
Cadbury Black and Green Chocolate 113
Cannonball 13
Cape Classics 40
Carr's and Kashi Crackers 120
Castoro Cellars-Paso Robles Calif 38
Chalk Hill Estate Vineyards & Winery 75
Chateau Pomije 140
Cincinnati Magazine 134
Cincinnati Wine Festival ..... D
Classico (Heinz) 91
Click Wine Group 50
Cline Cellars 32
Clos du Bois/Blackstone 105
DiStefano Winery 12
Dole/Midwest Pears 23
Dominio Buenavista 56
Don Sebastiani and Sons 52
Dr. Loosen 34
Duckhorn Wine Company 54
Duplin Wine Cellars 112
Eberle Winery 44
Ecco Domani/Maso Canali 60
Elk Creek Vineyards 25
Epiphany Cellars & Fortress Vineyards 46
Eric Solomon Selections 2
Estancia/Wild Horse 88
Ferrante Winery 53
Fess Parker Winery 47
Filus Winery 110
Firelands/Specialty Wines 97
Foley Family Wines 121
Folie a Deux / Menage a Trois 115
Folio Fine Wine Partners C
Franciscan/Robert Mondavi 89
Frank Family Vineyards 12
Frederick Wildman & Sons. Ltd. 100
Frei Brothers 67
Gamble Family Vineyards ..... E
George E. Delallo Co. 55
Ghost Pines/Whitehaven 67
Gnarly Head 111
Goelet Wine Estates 29
Graeter's Ice Cream 131
Graziano Family of Wines 5
Gruet Winery 18
Heck Estates 80
Henke Winery 10
Hoepler GmbH 75
Hook & Ladder Winery 130
JAQK Cellars 69
Joel Gott Wines 126
Joseph Carr 102
Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant 73
Keurig/Green Mountain Coffee Roasters 7
Kim Crawford/Nobilo 90
Kobrand 84
Korbel 86
Kroger Chefs ..... A
Kroger Deli 62
Kroger Deli 71
Kroger Deli 72
Laureate Imports Company, Inc. 76
Longboard Vineyards 15
Louis Martini 59
Mac Murray 59
Marc deGracia Selections 3
Mars/Dove Novelties 31
Martin Codax/Las Rocas 68
Martin Ray Winery 49
Martini & Rossi 81
Marzetti Dressings 135
McCrorie Family Vineyard 6
McNab Ridge 14
McWilliams 68
Meier's Wine Cellars 81
Michael~David Winery 48
Midwest Culinary Institute ..... B
Miner Family Winery 34
Mirassou 58
Moet Hennessy USA 27
Montecastelli Selections 18
Montgomery Inn/Klosterman Bakery 26
Mt Olive Pickles 45
Musco Early California/Land of Lakes 96
Nancy's (Heinz) 87
Napa Cellars Winery 116
Napa Ridge Winery 106
Neal Family Vineyards 6
Oliver Winery 21
One World, Seven Sisters 19
Ortega 101
P.K.N.T Winery 107
Peet's Coffee and Tea 128
Penfolds 93
Pine Ridge Winery 43
Precept Wine Brands 20
Purple Wine Company 84
Quintessential Wines 42
Rainier Wine 19
Raven's Glenn Winery 9
Ravenswood Winery 132
Rebel Wine Company 117
Redwood Creek Winery 66
Reh Kendermann Winery 122
Reidel 138
Renwood Winery 24
Reynolds Family Winery 13
Riondo USA 112
Robert Hall Winery 133
Robert Kacher Selections 38
Robert Oatley Vineyards 65
Robert Whale Selections 4
Rodney Strong Wine Estates 95
Rombauer Vineyards 51
Rosemount Estate, Devil's Lair 83
Row Eleven Wine Company 64
Shannon Ridge Winery 129
Snapple 37
St. James Winery 123
Ste Michelle Wine Estates 92
Sun Wine Imports 53
Tarrica Wine Cellars 16
Terlato Wines International 77
Terlato Wines International (2) 139
Terra d Oro / Jargon / Seaglass 118
TGIC Importers 70
The Hess Collection 39
The Kroger Marketplace 124
The Meeker Vineyard 33
The Other Guys 127
The Wine Group 99
Trinchero Napa Valley 119
Truchard Vineyards 30
Vaca/Hogue/Hayman & Hill 103
Valley Vineyards 11
Villa San Juliette 22
Vinamericas Selections LLC 57
Vinoklet Winery, Inc. 8
Vintage Point 98
Vintner Select Imports 17
Weingut Robert Weil 137
William Hill 58
Wine Cellar Innovations 41
Wine Smith Custom Cellars 74
Wine Storage Specialists 136
Wine Wave 43
Winery Exchange 63
Zenzen Wines 125

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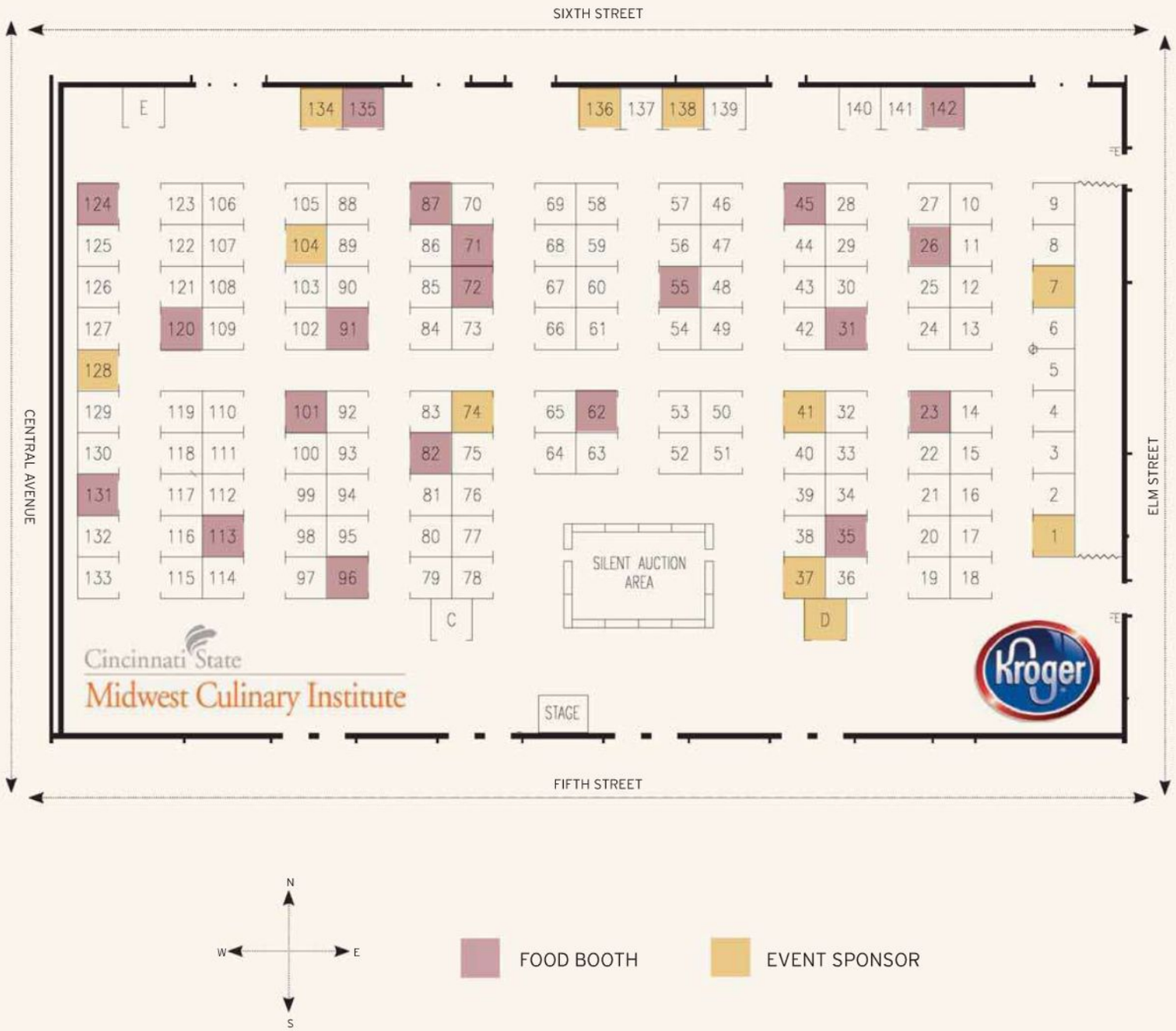

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Cristian Pietoso, Via Vite

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David Falk and Jono Fries,
Boca Restaurant Group

Shawn McCoy, Brown Dog Café

Owen Maass, Cumin

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Marilyn Harris, Cooking with Marilyn

Jeremy Lieb, Jeff Ruby's

Bruce Kim, Riverside Korean

Brian Whisman & Mike Van Fleet, Kroger

Julie Francis, Nectar

Jose Salazar and Summer Genetti,
The Palace at the Cincinnatian Hotel

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Romy Jung, Aroma Restaurant and Sushi

Meg Galvin,
Host of "The Dish", Midwest Culinary Institute

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Chris Prince, Primavista

Jon Corcoran and Chad Smith,
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Chef Edward Lee

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WHAT

1 Night, 12 Kitchens is a benefit for the Cincinnati State College Foundation culinary scholarships. Visit with MCI faculty, students & top local chefs in the school's teaching kitchens and sample appetizers, main courses and desserts.

WHEN

6:00–9:00 pm, Sunday, April 25, 2010

WHERE

Midwest Culinary Institute at Cincinnati State Technical and Community College 3520 Central Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45223

$300 FOODIE PACKAGE INCLUDES FRIDAY DINNER & VIP EVENT TICKET, OR...

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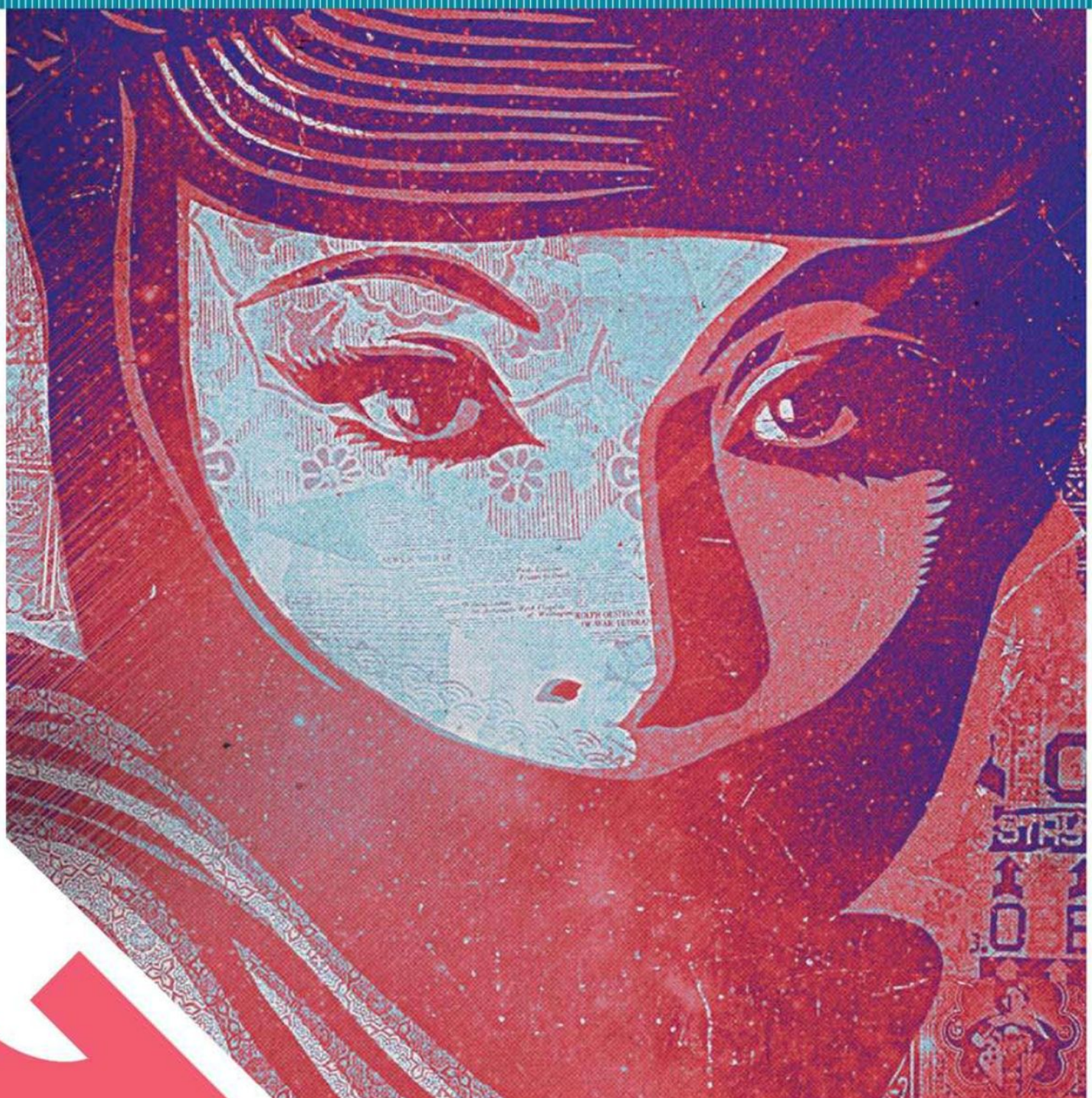
March

what to do now



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Agitprop Impresario

Shepard Fairey's show *Supply and Demand* opens at CAC

PAGE 246

Two Of A Kind

A pair of artists at Thunder-Sky, Inc., in Northside

PAGE 250

Travelers' Check

Rick Steves helps you hit the road

PAGE 252

Q&A

2008 MacArthur fellow David Montgomery talks about how the earth moves him.

PAGE 254

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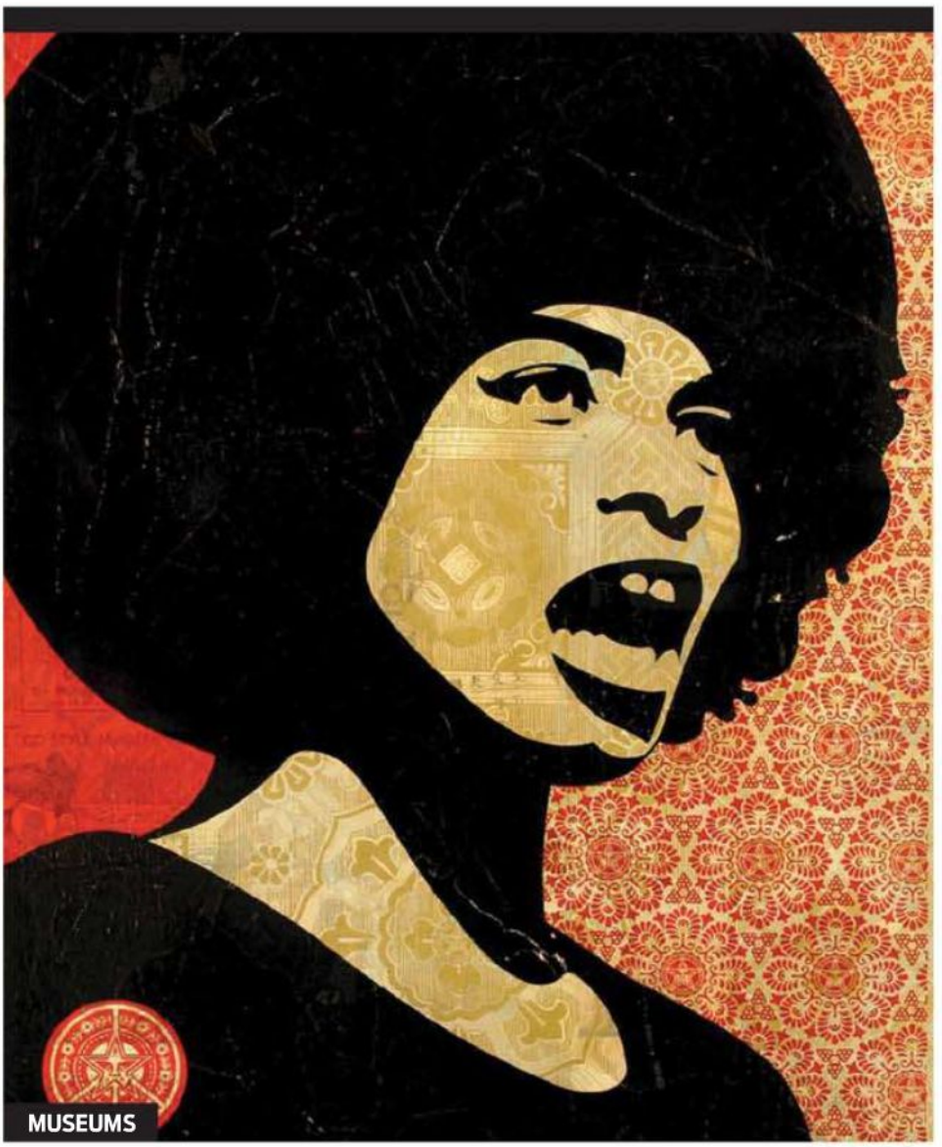

MUSEUMS

Auspicious Hope! » A year after artist

Shepard Fairey was arrested for "tagging property with graffiti" in Boston, the artist and provocateur brings his traveling exhibition, ***Supply and Demand,*** to Cincinnati. (In case you missed it, Fairey is the self-styled street artist behind the Barack Obama "Hope" poster.) *Supply and Demand* features approximately 250 pop culture and political works showcasing 20 years of Fairey's work, with screen prints, stickers, stencils, collages, and rubylith illustrations on wood, metal, and canvas. Also be on the lookout for Fairey's installations around the city. You know Sheriff Leis will. —SAMANTHA FRIEDMAN

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edited by ELIZABETH MILLER

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FAX (513) 562-2746

WEB SUBMISSIONS www.cincinnatimagazine.com/calendar/submitevent.aspx

SPECIAL EVENTS

EARLY SPRING FLORAL SHOW

Thru March 12: *Discovering the Plants of the Americas.* Learn about North, Central, and South American plant communities and their botanical explorers. **Admission:** free. Mon–Sun 10 am–5 pm. Krohn Conservatory, 1501 Eden Park Dr., Eden Park, (513)357-2621.

BOOK SIGNING: LISA McMANN

March 2: Author signs and discusses *Gone,* the third and final book in her *New York Times* best-selling teen series. **Admission:** free. Mon 7 pm. Joseph-Beth Booksellers, 2692 Madison Rd., Norwood, (513) 396-8960.

DON'T MISS! CINCINNATI REDS FIRST SPRING TRAINING GAME

March 5: Root, root, root for the Reds as they take on the Cleveland Indians at their new Arizona spring training home. **Tickets:** $5–$30. Fri 3:05 pm. Goodyear Ballpark, 1933 S. Ballpark Way, Goodyear, AZ, (623) 882-3130.

GEMSTREET USA

March 5–7: Be dazzled by this vendor show of gems, fossils, beads, crystals, and jewelry. **Admission:** $5–$7. Fri & Sat 10 am–6 pm, Sun 11 am–5 pm. Sharonville Convention Center, 11355 Chester Rd., Sharonville, (216) 521-4367.

OSCAR NIGHT AMERICA GALA: IT CAME FROM HOLLYWOOD

March 7: A red carpet welcome followed by cocktails, entertainment, appetizers, a three-course meal, silent and called auctions, door prizes and raffles, and the Academy Awards live on a big screen. Proceeds benefit People Working Cooperatively. **Tickets:** $150. Sun 5:30 pm–midnight. Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza, 35 W. Fifth St., downtown, (513) 351-7921.

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A portion of every ticket sold benefits Kindervelt's efforts on behalf of the Department of Asthma Research at CCHMC. Proceeds from the APRIL 25TH Opening Gala will support the Taft Museum's 2011 exhibition,
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American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Get ideas on how to spend your $8,000 at this event with more than 500 displays of ideas and trends for the home and garden. **Tickets:** $11. Sat & Sun 10:30 am–9 pm; Wed–Fri noon-9 pm; Sunday, March 14, 10:30 am–6 pm. Duke Energy Convention Center, 525 Elm St., downtown, (513) 797-7900.

RINGLING BROS. AND BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS

March 10–14: Experience "The Greatest Show on Earth" with acrobats, exotic animals, and daredevil stunts. **Admission:** $14.50–$85. Wed–Fri 7 pm; Sat & Sun 11 am, 3 pm, 7 pm. U.S. Bank Arena, 100 Broadway, downtown, (513) 562-4949.

DON'T MISS! QUEEN CITY CLASSIC CHESS TOURNAMENT

March 12 &13: Hundreds of students of all ages and skill levels play alongside international chess grandmasters. Friday night includes a simultaneous exhibition of grandmasters playing 40 students at one time. **Admission:** $35; simul only $20. Fri 7 pm, Sat 8:30 am–4:30 pm. Paul Brown Stadium, 1 Paul Brown Stadium, downtown, (513) 924-5038.

DON'T MISS! INTERNATIONAL WINE FESTIVAL GRAND TASTINGS

March 12 & 13: The 20th anniversary of this wine extravaganza includes more than 600 wines from 130 wineries worldwide. **Tickets:** $60–$110. Fri 6:30–9 pm; Sat 2:30–4:30 pm & 6:30–9 pm. Duke Energy Convention Center, 525 Elm St., downtown, (513) 723-9463.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

March 13: Celebrate your inner Irishman with this beloved tradition, followed by a party on Fountain Square with food, music, and (of course) plenty of beer. *Erin Go Bragh!* **Admission:** free. Sat 11 am. Parade begins at Fifth and Sentinel Sts., downtown, (877) 570-2385.

CELTIC CULTURE FESTIVAL

March 13 & 14: The Passport to the World Series event offers traditional dance, music and crafts from Celtic cultures. **Admission:** free. Sat & Sun noon–5 pm. Cincinnati Museum Center, 1301 Western Ave., West End, (513) 287-7000.

LECTURE: PATRICIA HEATON

March 15: Best known as the hilarious housewife from *Everybody Loves Raymond,* the SmartTalk Series brings this acclaimed actress, best-selling author, and mother of four to speak about how she balances motherhood with a successful career. **Tickets:** $40–$85. Mon 7:30 pm. Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 621-2787.

DON'T MISS! MIDWEST CRYSTAL AND HEALING ENERGY EVENT

March 19–21: Explore the metaphysical realm with this expo of healing sessions, psychic readers, and keynote speakers. **Admission:** $10, weekend pass $15. Fri 3–7 pm, Sat 10 am–6 pm, Sun 11 am–5 pm. Sharonville Convention Center, 11355 Chester Rd., Sharonville, (513) 324-5652.

DON'T MISS! CINCINNATI BEER FESTIVAL

March 26–28: Calling all beer enthusiasts for an unlimited sampling of more than 120 beers from around the world and discussions with local brewers. **Admission:** $30–$40, weekend pass $70. Fri 6–10 pm, Sat 5–9 pm, Sun 1–5pm. Duke Energy Convention Center, 525 Elm St., downtown, (646) 717-4322.

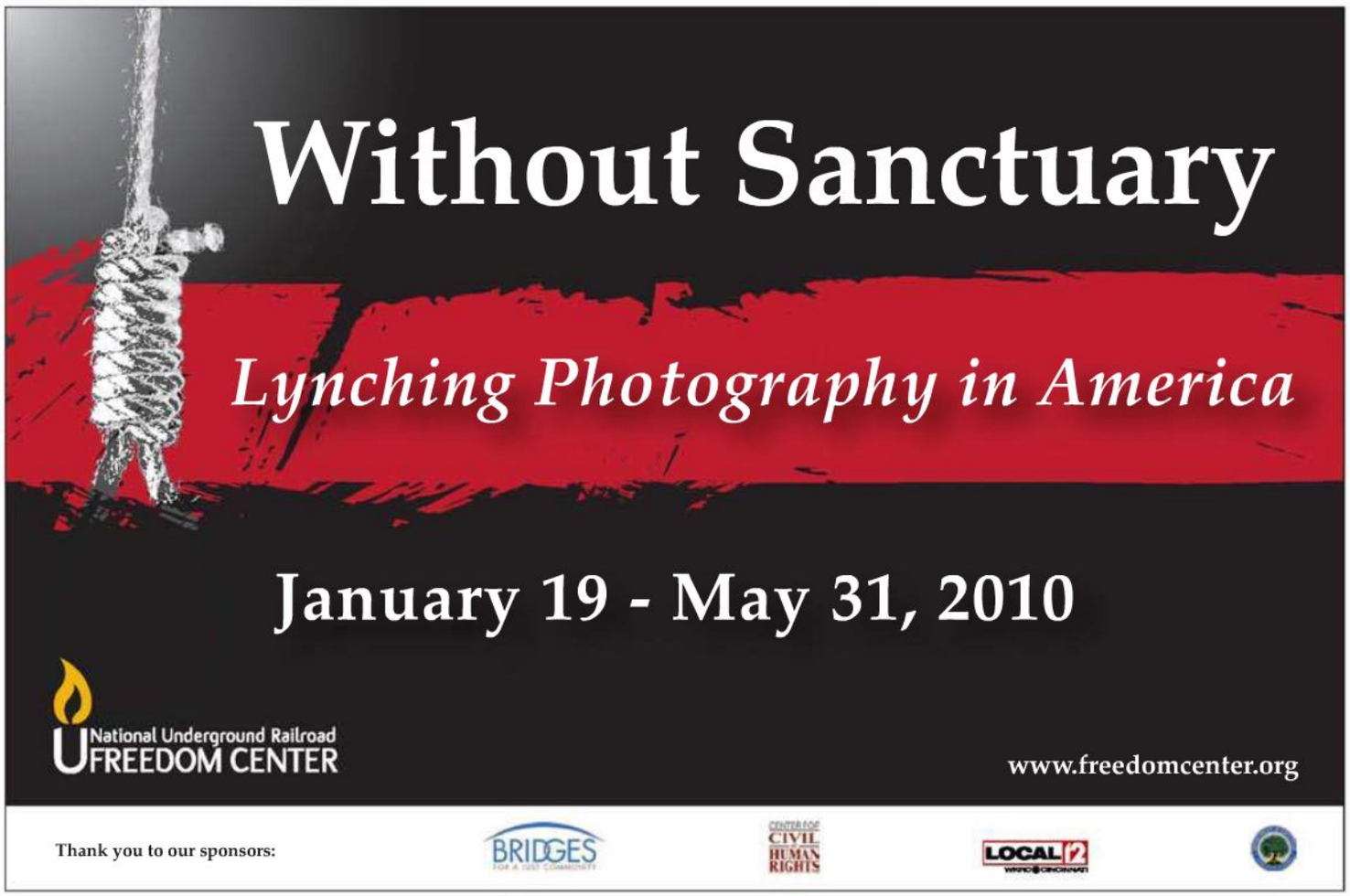
FULL MOON HIKE

March 29: Take a two-mile guided hike under the full Worm Moon. **Admission:** members free, nonmembers $5. Mon 8:30 am. Cincinnati Nature Center, 4949 Tealtown Rd., Milford, (513) 831-8052.

GALLERIES

COUNTRY CLUB

Thru April 10: *Shapeshifter.* Exhibition features seven artists who convey symbolic themes by manipulating concrete and abstract resources



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like photography, sculpture, and discarded household items. **Hours:** Mon–Sat 10 am–5 pm. 3202 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 792-9744.

MILLER GALLERY

Thru March 12: *One Artist, One Work (x 50).* To celebrate the gallery's 50th anniversary, each of the gallery's national and international artists presents one new piece of painting or sculpture. **Hours:** Tues–Sat 10 am–5:30 pm, Sun 11 am–3 pm. 2715 Erie Ave., Hyde Park, (513) 871-4420.

PENDLETON ART CENTER

March 26: *Final Friday.* More than 150 artists open their studios to the public. Guests can see the creative art spaces and purchase works directly from the artists. **Admission:** free, valet parking $4. Fri 610 pm. 1310 Pendleton St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 559-3958.

ALICE F. AND HARRIS K. WESTON ART GALLERY

March 19–June 6: *Disturbing Reality.* A group exhibition that explores quirky images and disquieting environments. Artists include Allison Grant, Allyson Klutenkamper, Nate Larson, Nicholas Sistle, and Mark Slankard, as well as Cincinnati-based artists Christopher Hoeting, Guennadi Maslov, Emily Momohara, and David Rosenthal. **Hours:** Tues–Sat 10 am–5:30 pm, until 8 pm performance nights; Sun noon–5 pm, until 7 pm performance nights. Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 977-4165.

CARL SOLWAY GALLERY

Thru April 10: *Leaves from a Cast Paper Novel.* Jay Bolotin presents 33 drawings from an illustrated manuscript. *Jerry Uelsmann.* A selection of works by this photographer known for dream-like black and white photomontages. **Hours:** Mon–Fri 9 am–5 pm, Sat noon–5 pm. 424 Findlay St., West End, (513) 621-0069.

AQUARIUM/ MUSEUMS

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF INDIANAPOLIS

Thru Feb 2011: *Barbie: The Fashion Experience.* Exhibition showcases the world's most popular doll chronicling her evolution over the past 50 years. Hands-on activities, like using fabrics and patterns in the Designers Workshop to create outfits, let future fashionistas explore the workrooms and runways of fashion. **Admission:** adults $14.50, seniors $13.50, children ages 2–17 $9.50. **Hours:** Tues–Sun 10 am–5 pm. 300 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, (317) 334-3322.

CINCINNATI ART MUSEUM

Thru May 2: *Martin Puryear.* Exhibition features prints inspired by furniture design, basketry, and international travel. *Edna Boies Hopkins: Color Woodcuts.* Colorful landscape prints and Japanese-inspired woodcuts of nature. *Kara Watkins: Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated).* Artist's signature silhouettes represent and satirize racial myths, slavery, and gender politics. **Thru May 9:** *Starburst: Color Photography in America 1970–1980.* This survey of color photography phenomena presents more than 200 works by 18 artists, including well-known photographers Harry Callahan, William Christenberry, and Helen Levitt. **Admission:** free. **Hours:** Tues–Sun 11 am–5 pm. 953 Eden Park Dr., Eden Park, (513) 721-2787.

CINCINNATI MUSEUM CENTER

Robert D. Lindner Family OMNIMAX: Thru July 4: *Under the Sea.* Narrator Jim Carrey takes viewers on an underwater expedition to bring you face-to-face with some of Earth's most mysterious creatures. **Tickets:** members $4.50–$5.50, nonmembers $5.50–$7.50. Call for film schedules. **Cincinnati Historical Society Library Hours:** Mon–Fri noon–5 pm, Sat 10 am–5 pm. (513) 287-7030. **Museum of Natural History and Science: Thru May 16:** *Gold.* Trace the origins and significance of the world's most valued mineral—from the molten depths of the Earth to glittering jewelry, artifacts, and gold rushes that shaped world history. **Admission:** $7.50–$16.50. Permanent exhibitions cover a variety of natural history topics. **Duke Children's Museum:** Interactive facility with exhibitions for children. **Admission:** adults $8, seniors $7, children 3–12 $6, toddlers 1–2 $4.50. **Hours:** Mon–Sat 10 am–5

(image) Eve Sonneman, *July 4, 1976, [World Trade Center]*, 1976. Two Cibachrome prints, each 8 x 10 in. © Eve Sonneman. Courtesy the artist.

cincinnati art museum

STARBURST

Color Photography in America 1970 – 1980

February 13 – May 9, 2010

Starburst: Color Photography in America 1970–1980 comprises a critical survey of the color photography phenomenon, presenting over two hundred works by eighteen photographers.

While you're enjoying this exhibit, take time for a delicious break in The Terrace Café, managed by the Cincinnati Art Museum. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. through 4 p.m.

Find complete program details at cincinnatiartmuseum.org or call (513) 721 ARTS.

The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges the generous operating support provided by the Fine Arts Fund, Ohio Arts Council, City of Cincinnati and Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation, as well as our members.

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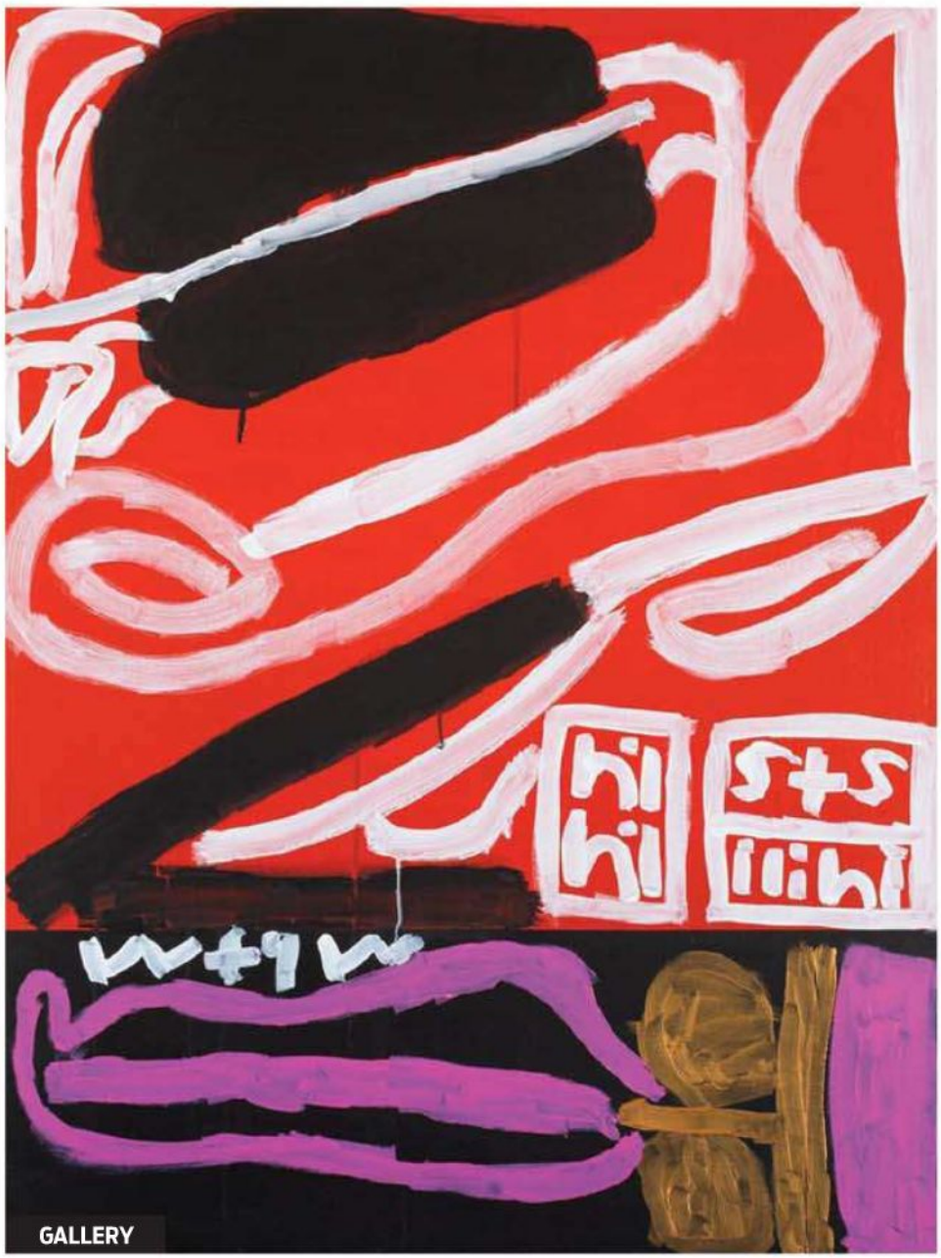

GALLERY

Ordered Pair » Thunder-Sky, Inc.'s *Out of Order* is your chance to see the work of two very different artists come together to tell a single story. David Jarred, who holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Xavier University, is best known for creating art from junk mail that he transforms into paper pulp, moulds, and layers with gouache. Kevin White, on the other hand, who has Down's Syndrome and does not speak, often creates large-scale works made from acrylic on wood panels (like *Machine Narrative,* above). Bill Ross, a social worker who, along with Keith Banner, cofounded both Thunder-Sky, Inc., and Visionaries & Voices, came across White's work in 2002 at an Evandale-based shelter workshop for people with disabilities. Today, the pairing of different artists is one of Thunder-Sky, Inc.'s goals. "David's and Kevin's work tells a story that you wouldn't be able to see if you did not pair them together," says Banner. "This exhibit highlights their sophistication."

— GINNY WALTERS

FEB 26–APR 12. ADMISSION: FREE. THUNDER-SKY, INC., 4573 HAMILTON AVE., NORTHSIDE, (513) 823-8914, WWW.THUNDERSKYINC.ORG

pm, Sun 11 am–6 pm. 1301 Western Ave., West End, (513) 287-7000.

CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER

Thru March 8: *Cedric Michael Cox: Soul Within Structure.* Urban cityscape paintings inspired by the artist's Over-the-Rhine neighborhood. **Thru May 2:** *Marilyn Minter: Chewing Color.* Artist presents enamel paintings and color photographs representing the gritty side of female empowerment and her video Green Pink Caviar. **Thru May 2:** *Shilpa Gupta.* Artist presents interactive video, Web sites, photographs, and public performances to explore themes of desire, religion, and notions of security. **Admission:** $4.50–$7.50; free Mon 5–9 pm. **Hours:** Mon 10 am–9 pm, Wed–Fri 10 am–6 pm, Sat & Sun 11 am–6 pm. 44 E. Sixth St., downtown, (513) 345-8400.

THE DAYTON ART INSTITUTE

Thru June 13: *All Things Bright & Beautiful: California Impressionist Paintings from the Irvine Museum.* Sixty paintings showcase the region's picturesque scenery from 1890 to 1930, before the state's urbanization went haywire. **Admission:** free. **Hours:** Tues–Sun 10 am–4 pm, Thurs 10 am–8 pm. 456 Belmonte Park North, Dayton, (800) 296-4426.

NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER

Thru May 31: *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America.* A controversial exhibition of photographs, postcards, and memorabilia taken at various U.S. lynching events in the early 20th century. Permanent exhibitions include an authentic 19th-century slave pen. **Admission:** $6–$9, children under 5 free. **Hours:** Tues–Sat 11 am–5 pm. 50 E. Freedom Way, downtown, (513) 333-7500.

NEWPORT AQUARIUM

March 1–31: The Aquarium's permanent collection of 70 exhibits and 14 galleries include five seamless acrylic tunnels totaling more than 200 feet in length, featuring aquatic life from around the world. **Admission:** $13–$20. **Hours:** Mon–Sun 10 am–6 pm. 1 Levee Way, Newport, (859) 491-3467.

TAFT MUSEUM OF ART

Thru May 2: *Dutch Utopia: American Artists in Holland, 1880–1914.* Approximately 70 paintings and works on paper by American artists such as Gari Melchers, William Merritt Chase, and Robert Henri. **Thru May 23:** *Small Paintings.* Small oil paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries. **March 12–May 23:** *Elizabeth Nourse: Motherhood in Holland and France.* A collection of paintings and sketches of mothers and children by the early 20th-century Cincinnati-native expatriate. **Admission:** adults $8, students and seniors $6, children under 18 free. **Hours:** Wed–Sun 11 am–5 pm. 316 Pike St., downtown, (513) 241-0343.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

WORLD PIANO COMPETITION

March 3: More than 200 pianists representing 15

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY THUNDER-SKY, INC.

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countries compete for cash prizes. **Admission:** free. Wed 2 pm. Taft Museum of Art, 316 Pike St., downtown, (513) 421-5342.

XAVIER UNIVERSITY CLASSICAL PIANO, CLASSICAL GUITAR & SWING SERIES

March 3: Trombonist Doug Finke brings his Tin Pan Alley All-Stars to perform standards from the 1940s and 1950s. **Tickets:** $3–$23. Sun 3 pm. **March 28:** Pianist Fabio Bidini presents a wide range of pieces ranging from baroque to modern. **Tickets:** $3–$19. Sun 2:30 pm. Gallagher Student Center Theater, Xavier University, 3800 Victory Pkwy., Evanston, (513) 745-3161.

CATACOUSTIC CONSORT

March 11: Internationally recognized director and musician Analisa Pappano leads a performance of Renaissance chamber and Baroque opera music. **Tickets:** $15–$18. Thurs 7:30 pm. The Carnegie Visual & Performing Arts Center, 1208 Scott Blvd., Covington, (859) 781-8151.

CINCINNATI SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

March 12–14: *Magnifique!* Maestro Paavo Järvi welcomes pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet for Grieg's "Piano Concerto." **Tickets:** $10–$95. Fri 8 pm, Sat 3 & 8 pm. **March 19 & 20:** *International Intrigue.* Maestro Arild Remmereit leads violinist Stefan Jackiw for Sibelius' patriotic "Finlandia," Bruch's "Scottish Fantasy," and Tchaikovsky's "Symphony No. 3." **Tickets:** $10–$95. Fri 11 am & Sat 8 pm. **March 26–28:** *Musical Seduction.* Maestro Paavo Järvi welcomes violinist Timothy Lees in a concert of Mozart, Dukas, and Rimsky-Korsakov. **Tickets:** $10–$95. Thurs 7:30 pm, Fri 11 am, & Sat 8 pm. Music Hall, 1241 Elm St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 381-3300.

CINCINNATI CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

March 21: Soprano Melody Moore performs arias by Verdi & Puccini. **Tickets:** $10–$50. Sun 2 pm. Memorial Hall, 1225 Elm St., Over-the-Rhine. Sun 7:30 pm. At Anderson Center, 7850 Five Mile Rd., Anderson Twp., (513) 723-1182.

ANCIENT OFFICE OF TENEBRAE

March 31: Gregorian chants and choral music of Holy week, including "Lamentations of Jeremiah" and Allegri's "Miserere" sung by the Cathedral choir. **Admission:** free. Wed 7:30 pm. Saint Peter in Chains Cathedral, 325 W. Eighth St., downtown, (513) 421-2222.

NIGHTLIFE

LATIN DANCE NIGHT

March 1–29: Start the workweek with salsa and meringue from local Latin band Tropicoso. **Cover:** $5. Mon 10 pm. The Mad Frog, 1 E. McMillan St., Corryville, (513) 784-9119.

BLUE WISP BIG BAND

March 3–31: Legendary band returns for its long-standing weekly gig. **Cover:** $10. Wed 8:30 pm. 318 E. Eighth St., downtown, (513) 241-WISP.

ON THE SAME PAGE 2010
Community Reading Program • February 1—March 31

On the Same Page continues through March!
This annual, community-wide reading program promotes reading and dialogue through one book everyone is invited to read together at the same time. This year's book is *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins.

Hunger Games Day: Read It, Play It, Survive It!
Main Library (corner of 8th & Vine streets)
Saturday, March 20, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

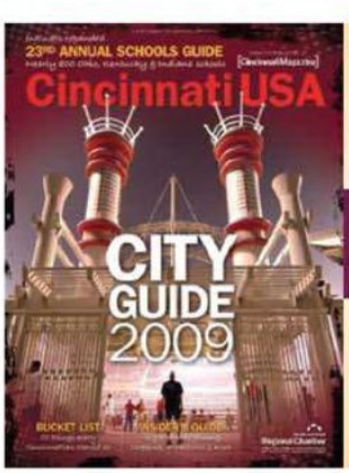
Spend the day with your family learning how to survive *The Hunger Games*—like your favorite characters featured in the book.

- Practice archery using a Bow and Marshmallows like Katniss.
- Decorate cookies like Peeta.
- Meet and learn how to raise goats like Prim.
- Test your knowledge with Hunger Games trivia.
- Learn wilderness survival skills with the Hamilton County Park District.
- Participate in a Hunger Games book discussion
- Come dressed as your favorite Panem citizen or tribute. Costumes encouraged.
- Have your game card stamped at 4 game stations during the program to enter it in a prize lottery—and may the odds be ever in your favor!

Learn more at www.CincinnatiLibrary.org/samepage

FREE ADMISSION
Parking available for $2 all day on Saturdays at the Garfield Garage (1/2 block from the Main Library on 9th Street – between Race & Vine).

On the Same Page Cincinnati is a project of the Public Library of Cincinnati & Hamilton County and is made possible in part by the Friends of the Public Library, Joseph-Beth Booksellers, Cincinnati Magazine, CET, and 91.7 WVXU.



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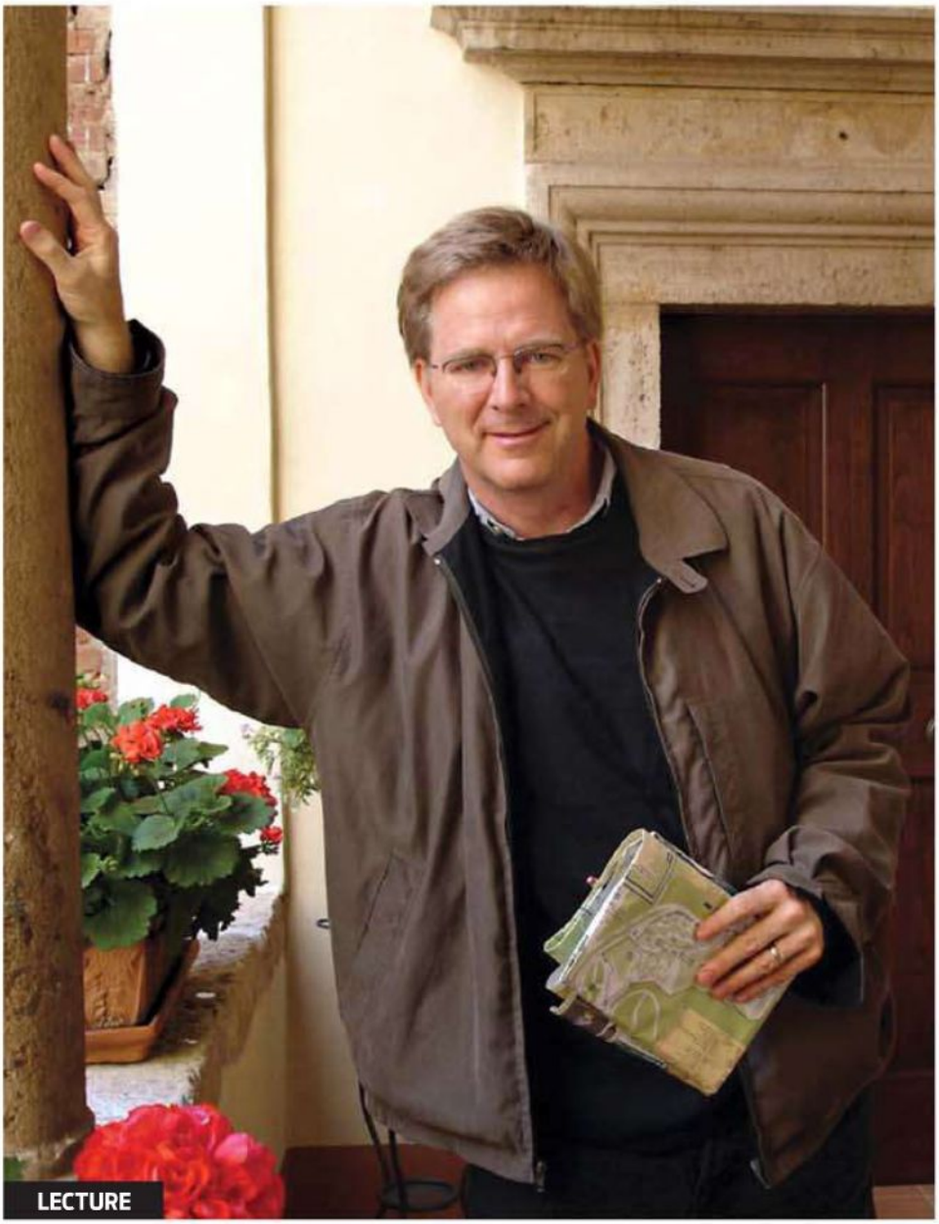

LECTURE

Back Door Man» Budget conscious travelers of the

world take heed: **Rick Steves,** your fair haired should-be travel guru and author of the *Europe Through the Back Door* series, voyages to the main branch of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County this month to help you keep one eye on the sights and one eye on your fanny pack. As public radio and TV fans already know, the Back Door series explains how to avoid crowds, stretch your dollar, pack smart, and eat well while maximizing your overall travel thrill. Some of Steves's favorite destinations include Vernazza in Italy's Cinque Terre region; Ireland's "watering holes"; and Gimmelwald, Switzerland. Steves teaches you how to travel like you own the place (the trick: think of yourself as a temporary local). "His candid, practical approach provides much more than just reviews and directions and finding good values," says Phyllis Hegner, the library's community relations manager. For instance, don't eat dinner at a restaurant in Spain at 7 pm. Just don't. We'll let him explain why. —SAMANTHA FRIEDMAN

MARCH 27 AT 2 PM. THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF CINCINNATI AND HAMILTON COUNTY, 800 VINE ST., DOWNTOWN, (513) 369-6900, WWW.CINCINNATILIBRARY.ORG

ALONZO BODDEN

March 4–7: This comic appeared on *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* and *The Craig Kilbourne Show* cracking about racism, sports, shopping, and dating. **Tickets:** $17–$20. Thurs 8 pm, Fri 8 & 10:15 pm, Sat 7:30 & 10 pm, Sun 7:30 pm. Funny Bone on the Levee, One Levee Way, Newport, (859) 957-2000.

THE COMET BLUEGRASS ALLSTARS

March 7–28: 2008 CEA award–winning six-piece brassy bluegrass group performs as the Sunday night house band. **Cover:** free. Sun 7:30 pm. The Comet, 4579 Hamilton Ave., Northside, (513) 541-8900.

BILLY GARDELL

March 25–28: Often recognized for appearances on *Yes, Dear* and *King of Queens,* this sharp-witted comedian uses his blue-collar upbringing as inspiration for candid, cunning observations on life. **Tickets:** $15–$17. Thurs 8 pm, Fri 8 & 10:15 pm, Sat 7:30 and 10 pm, Sun 7:30 pm. Funny Bone on the Levee, One Levee Way, Newport, (859) 957-2000.

BANDS/ CONCERTS

NEW FOUND GLORY

March 3: Gaining steam since the late '90s for confessional, über-charged ballads, the pop-punk quintet supports last year's album release, *Not Without a Fight.* **Tickets:** $20–$23. Wed 7 pm. Bogart's, 2621 Vine St., Corryville, (877) 598-8703.

THE NEW JAZZ BIG BAND

March 3–31: Mike Wade, Gary Winters, Wade Baker, and others team up to put a new spin on big band music. Wed 7:30 pm. **Cover:** $10. The Redmoor, 3187 Linwood Ave., Mt. Lookout, (513) 871-6789.

REVEREND HORTON HEAT

March 3 & 4: This veteran psychobilly trio taps deep into their southern roots for their latest studio album, *Laughin' and Cryin' with the Reverend Horton Heat*, a collection of country-steeped tunes about redneck follies, beer guts, and Texas. **Tickets:** $12–$15. Wed & Thurs 9 pm. The Southgate House, 24 E. Third St., Newport, (859) 431-2201.

LARRY KINLEY QUARTET

March 5: Cincinnati-born jazz vocalist and his crew perform smooth American favorites from George and Ira Gershwin, Cole Porter, and others. **Tickets:** $10–$12. Fri 8 pm. Fairfield Community Arts Center, 411 Wessel Dr., Fairfield, (513) 867-5348.

UMPHREY'S MCGEE

March 5: Chicago-based progressive rock jam band supports their new epic album, *Mantis.* **Tickets:** $20. Fri 9 pm. Madison Theater, 730 Madison Ave., Covington, (859) 491-2444.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY RICK STEVES

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THE HUNT FAMILY

March 6: Rhythm N Blue Ash welcomes this award-winning family of nine to the stage. The Hunts have thrilled audiences across the country with their Irish step dancing, unlimited musical talents, and a mix of Celtic, bluegrass, and popular tunes. **Tickets:** $10–$12. Sat 8 pm. Muntz Hall, Raymond Walters College, 9555 Plainfield Rd., Blue Ash, (513) 745-5705

BREAKING BENJAMIN

March 19: The alt-metal/post-grunge rockers dish heavy-hitting jams from their 2009 release, *Dear Agony,* including the album's first single, "I Will Not Bow." **Tickets:** $37–$42.50. Fri 7 pm. Bank of Kentucky Center, Northern Kentucky University, 500 Nunn Dr., Highland Heights, (800) 745-3000.

PORTUGAL. THE MAN

March 21: Hailing from now-famed Wasilla, Alaska (thanks to Sarah Palin, dontchaknow), this indie rock trio supports the release of *American Ghetto,* scheduled to drop this spring. **Tickets:** $12. Sun 8 pm. 20th Century Theatre, 3021 Madison Rd., Oakley, (513) 779-9462.

DON'T MISS! DAVID GRAY

March 23: This Brit superstar has been seducing listeners with somber, sentimental tunes since his turn-of-the-millennium "Babylon" days and his first proper album since 2005, *Draw the Line,* has him poised for more of the same. **Tickets:** $37–$42.50. Tues 7:30 pm. Taft Theatre, 317 E. Fifth St., downtown, (877) 598-8703.

MICHAEL BUBLÉ

March 24: The young crooner's old-soul style earned him another chart-topper with "Haven't Met You Yet," the first single from his 2009 album, *Crazy Love.* **Tickets:** $45–$85. Wed 8 pm. U.S. Bank Arena, 100 Broadway, downtown, (800) 745-3000.

CELTIC WOMAN

March 28: The internationally-renowned female quintet perform new and familiar Celtic favorites on their Songs from the Heart tour. **Tickets:** $39.50–$72.50. Sun 2 & 7pm. Procter & Gamble Hall, Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 621-8727.

DON'T MISS! TAYLOR SWIFT

March 28: Thanks to every Tri-state mother of a 14-year-old girl, this concert for America's country sweetheart sold out within minutes. Contact your favorite scalper or ticket agency if you missed out. Sun 7 pm. U.S. Bank Arena, 100 Broadway, downtown, (800) 745-3000.

DANCE

SHEN YUN

March 6: Chinese dancers and musicians don vibrant costumes amid elaborate stage designs while performing more than 20 ancient dance numbers whose history dates back thousands of

BEST OF THE CITY Cincinnati Magazine

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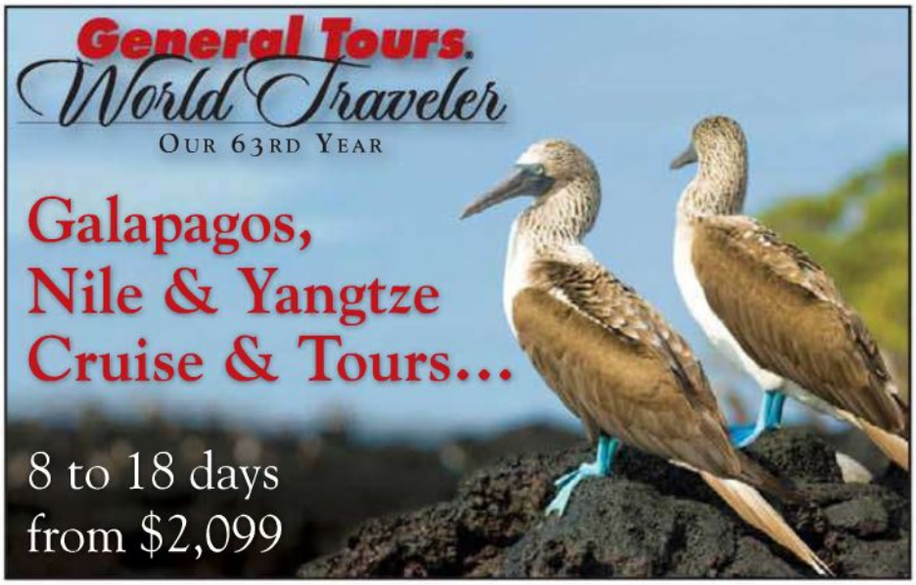

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Surface Tension

Scientist and author David Montgomery chronicles Earth's evolving terrain—and sets us straight about dirt.

BY CHRIS VARIAS

David Montgomery can feel the earth move under his feet...and yours. As supervisor of the Geomorphology Research Group at the University of Washington, he studies the evolution of the surface of the earth and man's role in the process. This month, Montgomery—a 2008 recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant"—discusses his most recent book, *Dirt: The Erosion of Civilizations,* as part of Xavier University's Ethics / Religion and Society lecture series.

I own a house less than a mile from the Ohio River. Should I buy flood insurance? Are you in the 100-year flood plain?

I know there was a flood in the '30s where my house was underwater. Bummer. If you're on the FEMA 100-year flood maps, I'd get flood insurance.

Can you end the global-warming debate, in 100 words or less? There is no debate. Putting greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will heat the planet. The big question is, how much? So rather than debating whether human action is influencing it, we should be debating how bad might it be, what are the potential consequences, and what the hell we should do about it.

Are your students optimistic about the ability of science to make a difference in the environment, or do they get jaded? Most of the students are trying to make a difference. Some of them are frankly pretty cynical about the prospects that face us over the next 100 years. But just because one's a cynic doesn't mean one needs to be a pessimist.

Has your work ever brought you to Cincinnati? The one time I was in Cincinnati, I crossed the river to visit the Creation Museum.

For business or pleasure? A purported natural history museum that claims the entire science of geology is wrong is of interest to me. I'm in the process of completing my next trade book, *Phantom Deluge,* which traces the cross-pollination between geology and Christianity over the last few thousand years.

Does the museum show up in the book? I describe my visit to it. I went and paid my $23. It was very educational but not in the way the curators intended.

Did they have a recreation of Jesus riding a terradactyl? No, but they did have a triceratops with a saddle on it. I thought that was pretty clever. I learned that T-Rexes were vegetarians.

They were ahead of their time. Yeah, I never realized that the hippie donut shop down the street from my house in Seattle had something in common with Tyrannosauruses.

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years. **Tickets:** $30–$125. Sat 7 pm. Music Hall, 1241 Elm St., downtown, (513) 621-2787.

DON'T MISS! BALLET & BEER: MOZART'S REQUIEM

March 18: Get a sneak peak of the Cincinnati Ballet's upcoming performance, *Mozart's Requiem,* with this informal rehearsal followed by a refreshment reception and dancer meet-and-greet. Reservations required. **Admission:** free. Thurs 5:15 pm. Cincinnati Ballet Center, 1555 Central Parkway, West End, (513) 621-5282.

OLIVE DANCE THEATRE

March 19 & 20: An interpretive, interdisciplinary performance inspired by African-American vernacular. Presented by Contemporary Dance Theater. **Tickets:** $20–$27. Fri & Sat 8:30 pm. Jarson-Kaplan Theater, Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 591-2557.

MOZART'S REQUIEM

March 26 & 27: New resident choreographer Adam Hougland presents a full-length ballet set to *Mozart's Requiem* that reflects the solemnity of life's cycles. **Tickets:** $25–$80. Fri 8 pm, Sat 2 & 8 pm. Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 621-5282.

THEATER

ADDING MACHINE: A MUSICAL

Thru March 6: A dark comedy about a man who murders his boss after his job is replaced by a machine. Presented by Know Theatre Cincinnati. **Tickets:** $12. Thurs–Sat 8 pm, Sun 3 pm. 1120 Jackson St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 300-5669.

BREAKING UP IS HARD TO DO

Thru March 7: Two friends from Brooklyn embark on a comic, eventful Labor Day weekend at a 1960s Catskills resort. **Tickets:** $19–$21, Thurs–Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. Covedale Center for the Performing Arts, 4990 Glenway Ave., Price Hill, (513) 241-6550.

OTHELLO

Thru April 3: A manipulative villain destroys the charmed life of a heroic general and his wife. **Tickets:** $20–$26. Thurs–Sat 7:30 pm, Sun 2 pm. Cincinnati Shakespeare Company, 719 Race St., downtown, (513) 381-2273.

DON'T MISS! THE 39 STEPS

March 2–14: Alfred Hitchcock's comedy thriller about a manhunt that ensues when an ordinary man is suspected of murder. Presented by Broadway Across America. **Tickets:** $20.50–$50.50. Tues–Fri 8 pm, Sat 2 & 8 pm, Sun 1 & 6:30 pm. Procter & Gamble Hall, Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 621-8727.

BECKY'S NEW CAR

March 10–28: A middle-aged woman rebels against her mundane life when a socially inept millionaire falls for her at first sight. Presented by Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati. **Tickets:** $30–$40. Wed & Thurs 7:30 pm, Fri & Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. 1127 Vine St., Over-the-Rhine, (513) 421-3555.

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY DAVID MONTGOMERY

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DADDY-LONG-LEGS

March 13–April 11: A lighthearted musical about an 18-year-old girl who is offered college tuition by an orphanage trustee, under the condition that she write him monthly but never discovers his identity. **Tickets:** $25–$62. Call for times. Robert S. Marx Theatre, Playhouse in the Park, 962 Mt. Adams Cir., Mt. Adams, (513) 421-3888.

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

March 25–April 11: A romantic comedy set in 1920s Hollywood about the early days of sound film. **Tickets:** $19–$21, Thurs–Sat 8 pm, Sun 2 pm. Covedale Center for the Performing Arts, 4990 Glenway Ave., Price Hill, (513) 241-6550.

KID STUFF

ANNIE OAKLEY'S WILD WEST SHOW

March 5 & 6: The Madcap Puppet Theatre presents hilarious characters and tall tales of American history. **Admission:** $7. Sat 11 am & 1 pm, Sun 1 & 5 pm. Gallagher Student Center Theater, Xavier University, 3800 Victory Pkwy., Evanston, (513) 745-3576. **March 26 & 27: Admission:** $7. Sat 11:30 am & 1:30 pm, Sun 1 & 3 pm. Cincinnati Art Museum, 953 Eden Park Dr., Mt. Adams, (513) 921-5965.

FAMILIES CREATE!

March 6: *CANstruction.* The annual, national competition of whimsical sculptures created from canned goods by local architects and design firms will inspire you and your kids to design and screen-print your own labels. Reservations required. **Registration:** members $8, nonmembers $12. Sat 10 am. Weston Art Gallery, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 684-4524.

YO GABBA GABBA! LIVE!: THERE'S A PARTY IN MY CITY!

March 20: DJ Lance Rock and the rest of the Nickelodeon crew come to life with interactive singing and dancing. **Tickets:** $25–$35. Sat 2 & 5 pm. Aronoff Center for the Arts, 650 Walnut St., downtown, (513) 621-2787.

PLAYHOUSE DISNEY LIVE!

March 26: You're invited to the Mickey Mouse Clubhouse for a music spectacular, with the Little Einsteins, Pooh, Tigger, and others. **Tickets:** $17–$45. Fri 3 & 6:30 pm. U.S. Bank Arena, 100 Broadway, downtown, (800) 745-3000.

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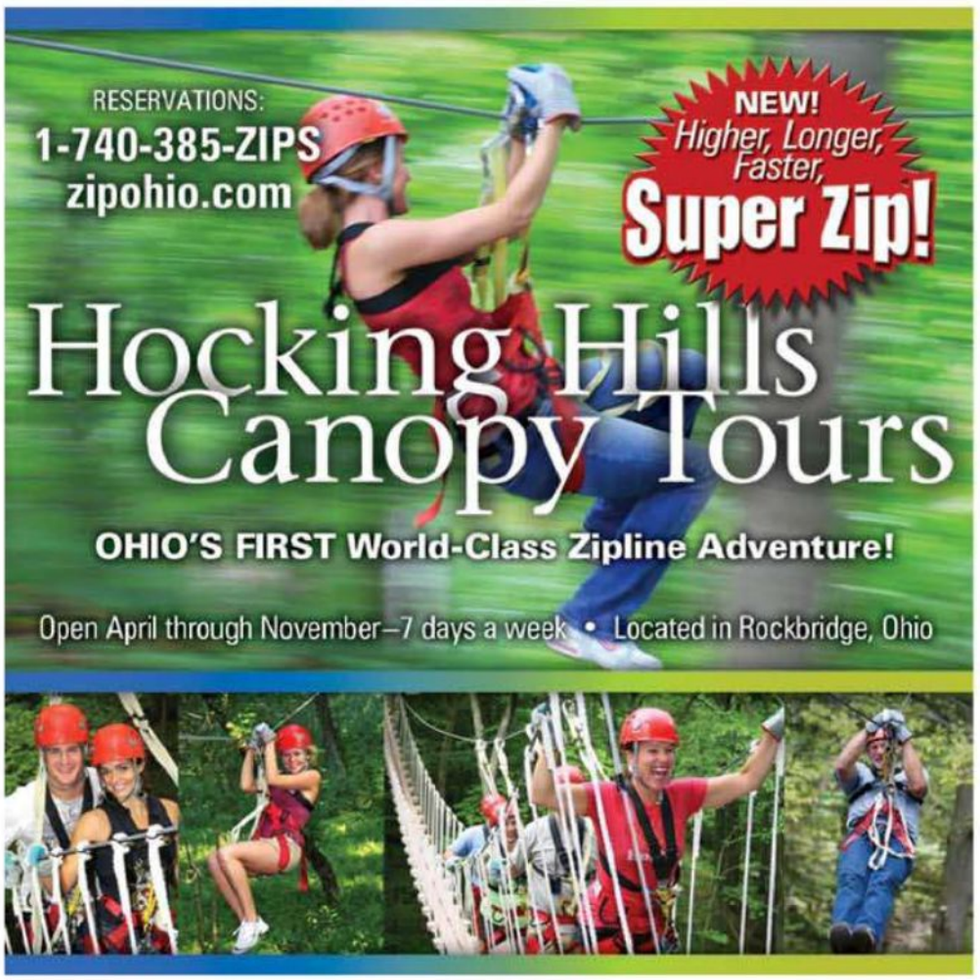

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Flake of Darkness

Cold invades. Clouds gather. Gloom descends. Panic reigns. Snowpocalypse Now!

THE TV WEATHER PROPHETS warn of snow. They foretell three to six inches, advising that it will fall soon, swiftly, and with extreme prejudice. A succession of colorful, mystical graphics are presented as proof. Unless I'm hallucinating the evidentiary graphics, unhinged by the mere prospect of six inches of snow.

They explain at some length, these teleprophets, that The Looming Ordeal will begin after midnight. That by dawn, the city will lie shrouded beneath the first two inches. That the roads, our commutes, will be slick, slow, arduous. They don't say deadly. I listen closely for the word and hear them not say it. Not that they have to. Their sober expressions and happy talk–less presentations make clear what they're thinking: Many of us are going to die. Or be horribly, horribly inconvenienced.

My nerves twitch with foreboding. Except for my house, furnace, water heater, fireplace, telephone, television, radio, computer, and L.L.Bean slippers, I'm totally unprepared for the presumptive Blizzkrieg. For that, I blame myself. Because as the old saying goes: Everybody complains about the weather but nobody kills it.

At the bottom of the TV screen, the first casualties of tomorrow's Potential Onslaught are already being made known: School closings. Event cancellations. Business delays. Seems doubtful a single societal function or outside-the-home activity will endure the promised Significant Accumulation. To underscore that prospect, a salt truck, yellow lights dancing over the as-yet unburied landscape, speeds past my window, pretreating the road. There is poignancy in its pointlessness.

But no. Wait. There's still time. To act. To fight. To go Krogering. For bread, for milk. *For survival.* Yes. I will. I'll go. Because not going would mean the snowflakes have already won.

IN VEHICLE, IN TRANSIT. Portentous, preliminary flurries flutter and swirl, touch ground, mostly melt. Streets are damp and lightly dusted. Choked with traffic. Fellow breadseekers and milk-stalkers, I feel certain. Or who knows? Maybe they're simply desolate souls called to witness and experience the unwhitened, fully frictional world one final time. But whyever we're all out here, we're each of us driving the same: slowly, selfishly, herkily-jerkily, as if the three-to-six have already fallen. Practicing for tomorrow when it has.

Kroger is a crush. Aisles and checkout lines engorged with rampaging hoarders. Milk and bread are gone. Eggs, bananas, o.j., Doritos, ground beef, Cheerios, frozen pizzas, and Bud Light have also vanished. Clearly, my neighbors will not surrender to the storm. Or if they do, it won't be on an empty stomach.

HOME. MORNING. Lawns are faintly powdered. Streets clear. No inches. Threat passed. Bullet dodged. This, then, is the winter of our discombobulation.

ILLUSTRATION BY ADAM McCAULEY

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Pictured left to right: Kip Heekin, Monica Moore, Joel Stone, David Hummel, Kelley Jensen.

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